

THE TIMES

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Shake-up will hit 'time-servers'

Civil Service jobs opened to all-comers

By MICHAEL DYNES
WHITEHALL
CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR civil service jobs are to be advertised in the national press under the most radical proposals to reform Whitehall bureaucracy since the creation of the modern Civil Service in the 19th century.

Candidates for any of the top 620 Whitehall posts will have to demonstrate the right combination of experience and achievement for the job, marking the end of a guaranteed route to the top for Whitehall time-servers. New terms and job conditions will mean the end of security of tenure until retirement, and top civil servants who fail to carry out their duties efficiently will face compulsory redundancy.

The unprecedented proposals

Plans to open top Whitehall jobs to all-comers will end the days of cloistered worlds for civil servants and answer accusations that reform is faltering

als are part of a year-long review of Civil Service career management and succession planning, commissioned by Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet secretary and head of the home civil service, which will be published on Monday.

Previous reforms, such as the 1968 Fulton report, highlighted the need for greater management skills and a widening of the pool of talent from which administrators were drawn. The 1988 Next Steps initiative has seen the executive functions of government hived off in semi-autonomous agencies. No previous reform has, however, attempted to challenge the power and privileges of Whitehall mandarins.

The reforms are the first attempt to overhaul Whitehall's policy-making functions. They complement the Next Steps and market-testing components of the government's public service reform programme.

Under the proposals, drafted by the Cabinet Office efficiency unit led by John Oughton, fast-track recruitment into the Civil Service will be kept. But it will be modified to ensure greater diversity of intake, including more scientists and engineers and people with "frontline experience" in commerce and industry.

Fast-trackers, who have traditionally been seen as an elite group of arts graduates recruited overwhelmingly from Oxbridge, will be required to gain more outside experience and will have to compete with people from all walks of life. The objective is to increase Whitehall's exposure to external influences and ensure that the days of "cloistered worlds and magic paths to the top" are over.

The government is determined to preserve the fundamental principles of the British Civil Service, including ministerial accountability, political neutrality, free and frank advice, and promotion on merit. But ministers are convinced that Britain will be

better served by a new generation of administrators who have acquired experience in industry, commerce and other government departments.

Although the Civil Service will hope to have provided a pool of people capable of filling the 620 positions of permanent secretary, deputy secretary and under secretary, the efficiency unit report will recommend abolition of the closed system in which in-house candidates almost automatically get the top jobs.

At present permanent secretaries can earn around £90,000, while deputy secretaries and under secretaries can earn up to £64,000 and £60,000 respectively.

Under the proposed reforms, high-achieving civil servants will still have a good chance of securing key appointments. But they will face competition from outsiders who could be brought in to fill grade one positions. Vacancies will be advertised across Whitehall and in the national press, and all Whitehall departments will be made accountable to the efficiency unit for senior appointments.

The report will emphasise the need for "striking a balance" between ensuring that external talent can be recruited when necessary and not making those on the inside feel they have little or no prospect of top jobs.

The report will also advise against fixed-term contracts. It will stress the need for new mechanisms to make sure that top civil servants who fail to perform can quickly be removed. Top Civil Service contracts will be "rightened up," and officials will be increasingly called to account when policy initiatives fail.

The efficiency unit's findings will be announced by John Major in the Commons on Monday. However, the government is not expected to announce its response until the new year.

Leading article, page 19

Firms in bribery case still on tendering list

By CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT

THREE foreign companies named in court as being involved in paying £1.5 million in bribes to a senior Ministry of Defence official to win orders are still on the government's tendering list.

Orders have been placed as recently as 12 months ago with two of the firms, although their link with the corrupt official has been under investigation for the last four years. The MoD has confirmed. Gordon Foxley, 69, was convicted a fortnight ago of 12 charges of corruption involving contracts worth £50 million over a period between 1979 and 1984.

Workers at the Royal Ordnance factory in Blackburn, who consistently lost contracts to the three companies, believe that the corrupt official has distorted one section of the ordnance industry in Britain, leading to the loss of 700 jobs and the capacity to supply certain kinds of ammunition to the British Army.

On Monday trade unions will meet the company to discuss a further 162 redundancies at the factory and demand that work given to the

foreign firms as a result of corruption be terminated. They are also seeking an urgent meeting with ministers to press their case for such projects to be repatriated.

Jack Dromey, the national secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and spokesman for the Royal Ordnance factory trade unions, said yesterday: "Corruption saw production and jobs exported. Those corrupt contracts should be terminated and returned to the Royal Ordnance which lost the tendering bids unfairly."

The three companies named in the charges were Fratelli Borletti, a Fiat subsidiary; Gebrüder Junghans, of Germany; and A. S. Rauffoss, of Norway. Gebrüder Junghans was in difficulties before receiving substantial contracts worth £25 million for a new mortar fuse. The most recent contract was placed with them in October last year.

The MoD refused to give details of the new contracts. Last night it said it was "considering its position" in relation to the three firms.



Albert Reynolds, the Irish prime minister, leaving Londonderry's Guildhall amid tight security on his visit to Northern Ireland yesterday

Dublin leak threatens Ulster talks

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR
AND NICHOLAS WATT

JOHN Major's Northern Ireland initiative ran into trouble yesterday after disclosure that Dublin officials were calling on Britain to accept that demands for a united Ireland were legitimate.

London was irritated and Dublin embarrassed over the leak of a paper drawn up by Irish civil servants suggesting that the goal of Irish unity should be recognised by the British government in the creation of "future structures" between north and south to

increase cross-border co-operation. The document balanced that by accepting that Ireland could countenance changes to its constitutional claims on Northern Ireland.

But by speaking of future structures, seen as the establishment of cross-border executive boards in areas such as transport and tourism, the paper again raised the prospect of joint north-south authority over some of the affairs of Ulster.

While the contents of the paper would not have surprised ministers, its leaking was a blow to Mr Major. Joint authority is seen by

unionists as the thin end of the wedge and the precursor to joint sovereignty. Unionists were also voicing concern over indications in Mr Major's Commons speech on Thursday that he was prepared to sideline Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party if it tried to exercise a veto over the peace process.

Yesterday the Official Unionists warned Mr Major that they would not accept such a tactic. David Trimble, MP for Upper Bann, said the Ulster Unionists "will not be party to the marginalisation of the unionist community."

Peter Robinson, deputy

leader of the Democratic Unionists, said: "You can only have peace if you have the unconditional surrender or defeat of the terrorists and it must be firmly bedded on principles of agreement which are democratically agreed by the people of Northern Ireland."

The British government was particularly angered by the leak because it has been pressing the Irish government for weeks for the detailed terms under which it would consider giving up its territorial claim on Ulster. Repeated requests for a paper have proved fruitless, and

yesterday's leak was the first ministers had seen of it.

The dispute overshadowed the visit to Ulster yesterday by Albert Reynolds, the Irish prime minister. He insisted that Dublin and London were on "parallel tracks".

The paper is understood to be a draft response by officials to the inter-governmental conference in September. Mr Reynolds said: "No such document has been presented to the Irish government. The Irish government has not authorised such a document."

Shankill charge, page 2
Irreconcilables, page 18

Cold blows in from Siberia

By STAFF REPORTERS

SIBERIAN weather with snow and sub-zero temperatures was last night blowing in from the east threatening a big chill for the weekend. Tonight and tomorrow's night temperatures are likely to drop below zero with the West Midlands and Shropshire expected to fall as low as -4C and -5C.

The London Weather Centre said snow was possible over the east of Eng-

Clinton leads war on global recession

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton last night pledged to lead a "charge against global recession", but insisted that a recalcitrant Europe had to play its part by swiftly completing the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and declared that America would in future give much greater priority to the economically-dynamic East Asia.

Europe would remain "a central partner for the US in security, foreign policy and commerce," the president said at the opening of the first Pacific rim summit, "but as our concern shifts to economic challenges that are genuinely global we must look across the Pacific as well as the Atlantic... we must focus our global initiatives on the fastest-growing regions."

In a speech that betrayed some disquiet with his European allies, Mr Clinton said America had acted to cut its deficit demanded at successive G7 summits. The message of last Wednesday's congressional approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement was that "the Cold

War may be over but the US is not about to pull up its stakes and go home". America would "lead the charge against global retrenchment," he said, but its European and Japanese partners also had to follow strategies to promote economic growth.

In particular, the Uruguay round's global trade liberalisation provisions would pump \$5,000 billion (£3,400 billion) into the global economy provided America and the EC, particularly France, settle its differences over agricultural subsidies by the December 15 deadline.

The foreign ministers of the 17-nation Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum added to the pressure on the EC last night by strongly demanding the Uruguay round's completion by December 15. Although Apec is only a fledgling organisation, the summit sent a strong warning of an eventual Pacific rim trading bloc accounting for half the world's economic output if the EC did not make the required concessions.

Summit presses EC, page 14

13th motorway victim dies

THE death toll in the M40 school minibus crash rose to 13 yesterday when Katie Murray, who was critically injured, died just over a week after she celebrated her 13th birthday.

Katie, of Wollaston, near Stourbridge, West Midlands, was a keen musician and regarded at the Hagley Roman Catholic High School as one of the brightest pupils of her grade.

News of her death in hospital filtered through to the children during a mid-morning break. They huddled in groups hugging each other and weeping. Teachers were also crying as they tried to comfort the children.

Earlier, many had taken flowers into school to add to the scores of bouquets already crowding the entrance hall.

Cause unknown, page 5

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After-hours surgeries to replace GP night calls

BY JEREMY LAURANCE AND LUCY BERRINGTON

HEALTH ministers plan to introduce new GP emergency centres to replace most night calls by doctors.

Patients would be expected to travel to centres at existing surgeries in main towns, after making an appointment by telephone. Only those too sick or elderly to move would receive a home visit.

The centres would be set up only with local doctors' agreement. Nearly half of GPs cover all their own patients' night calls. Others use deputising services staffed by freelance doctors.

Night visits have increased five-fold over 25 years and have doubled in the past three years. In a survey last year, three quarters of GPs said that they would like to opt out of their 24-hour responsibility and four out of five said that they would favour primary care emergency centres.

Dr Brian Mawhinney, the health minister, yesterday agreed that GPs should have more freedom from the 24-hour cover commitment. In a letter to the British Medical Association, which it released yesterday, Dr Mawhinney said the emergency centres would lead to a "radically different way of providing out-of-hours care".

The new centres, which will be based largely at existing surgeries, will cover large populations and release GPs from the system in which thousands are on call every night, often with several serving the same area.

The BMA welcomed the move, which comes after two decades of growing opposition among GPs to night visits. But the plan was condemned by the Patients' Association, which said the arrangement

would penalise patients. Linda Lamont, the director said: "There are certain people who call the doctor out unnecessarily, but most GPs will tell you it is only a small percentage. I don't think the irresponsible few should carry the can for everyone else."

Dr John Chisholm, deputy chairman of the BMA's GPs committee, said the present system was on the point of collapse with the government unable to fund it and GPs unable to provide it. Doctors say that a disturbed night caused by one patient means 30 to 40 patients receive worse care the next day.

Dr Chisholm said that emergency centres would bring night care into line with daytime services, which require patients to travel to the surgery unless they are too ill, and would use doctors more efficiently.

He said that the scheme was designed to contain the increased demand for out-of-hours treatment for which there is "no clinical explanation". GPs say an increasing number of night calls are made for routine or trivial conditions. Pilot emergency centres are already operating in Glasgow, Nottingham and Medway.

Toby Harris, director of the Association of Community Health Councils, gave a warning that the new system might deter calls from those in need. "Anything which puts a barrier in the way of somebody taking advice when they need it, whether because people do not want to travel or see a doctor they don't know, is clearly very worrying. It might well influence their decision on whether or not to seek help."



Tom and Dawn Young with their son Scott, a hit and run victim, in a Newcastle hospital. Andy Cole and Lee Clarke, Newcastle footballers, visited Scott yesterday. He has to miss the Liverpool match tomorrow, his eighth birthday treat

Howard drives home prisons victory

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

■ The Prison Officers' Association plans to challenge a High Court decision that says their members lack the power to strike

LEADERS of the prison officers' union last night called off all industrial action in 133 jails as Michael Howard sought to build on his court victory by urging them to begin discussions about new arrangements for negotiating pay.

As lawyers acting for the 29,000-strong Prison Officers' Association prepare to challenge a court ruling effectively ending its status as a trade union, the home secretary said discussions should be held to put industrial relations on a new footing.

Mr Howard said: "There are many questions which need to be resolved in order to put industrial relations in the prison service, including relations with the POA, on a

proper footing." He added that these included giving prison officers access to industrial tribunals for the first time, extending some aspects of employment protection to them and providing arrangements by which officers' pay can be settled.

Mr Howard went to court because the industrial action threatened to put up to 2,000 new prisoners into police cells from next Monday.

There was some confusion at the Home Office as Mr Howard and prison service managers carefully avoided describing the POA as a

union, although Peter Lloyd, the prison minister, said the government looked to resume its, in the main, extremely good relations with the union.

Mr Howard acted less than 24 hours after Mr Justice May issued a temporary High Court injunction backing his application that prison officers had the powers of a police constable and were not entitled to legal protection if they took strike action.

Prison service sources last night refused to say whether they want the POA to turn itself into a body similar to the Police Federation. Because the

police do not have the power to strike, they have been given special pay arrangements, but it was unclear whether such a deal was open to the POA.

Derek Lewis, director general of the prison service, said the courts had interpreted the law as saying the association did not have the power to call a strike. "We think that is the right position as far as prison officers are concerned. But that does not mean we cannot have a continuing relationship with organisations such as the POA," he said.

John Bartell, chairman of the POA, said he did not know under what authority he could meet Mr Lewis as he had been elected head of the association under trade union legislation. "I want to receive an assurance that he recognises us as an independent trade union."

Siberian freeze blows in to Britain

Continued from page 1
likely today and tomorrow in the form of showers which will leave a couple of inches on the high ground and a dusting on the lower ground.

British Rail was gearing up for the possibility of worsening weather. A spokesman said: "We learnt a lot of lessons from the now famous 'wrong type of snow'. It was no joke, it was a different type of snow than we normally experience — it was powdery."

"We now have a number of measures guarding the air intakes on locomotives to protect the engines. We also learnt that if we have severe bad weather there is no point trying to run a normal timetable."

Alistair Cheyne, director of AA Roadside Services, said: "We expect to do just over 13,000 breakdowns a day at this time of year, but the first few days of the cold snap have seen nearer 16,500."

"Motorists in the South should learn from their Scottish counterparts and prepare for winter. When there is freezing weather in the South, the AA takes thousands of calls every day from motorists who forgot to put anti-freeze in their cooling systems and in many cases the call to the AA is too late as the damage has already been done."

This week saw the launch of the annual "Coldwatch", a campaign which offers practical advice in the winter and urges neighbours and families to take extra care of the elderly. Sir George Young, the housing minister, decided to open 100 beds in London through the Salvation Army next week because of the cold snap.

Similar conditions are expected to continue until at least the middle of next week.

Forecast, page 22
Freeze home rules, page 27

Man hears Shankill bombing charges

A MAN was charged in Belfast yesterday with the murders of the nine innocent civilians who died in the IRA bomb attack on the Shankill Road last month.

Sean Kelly, 19, who was injured in the explosion at Frizzell's fish and chip shop, was in pyjamas when he appeared at a special court in Musgrave Park Hospital. Stitches marks on his face, he walked stiffly into Room 6 in the heavily guarded secure wing of the hospital, where he is being treated for his injuries since the October bombing.

He sat in an armchair as the court clerk read out the nine murder charges. The victims were schoolgirls Leanne Murray, 13, Michelle Baird, 7, her mother Mrs Evelyn Baird, 28, Michael Morrison, 27, George Williamson, 63, his wife Gillian, 49, Wilma McKee, 38, Sharon McBride, 29, and her father, shopowner John Frizzell, 63.

Mr Kelly, of Brompton Park, Ardoyne, was also charged with causing the explosion. But he was not charged with murdering Thomas Begley, the IRA man who died in the blast.

A RUC detective chief inspector said he charged Mr Kelly yesterday in Ward 18 of the hospital. He said Mr Kelly replied "not guilty" to all charges. The officer said he believed he could connect Mr Kelly with the charges.

A defence solicitor handed the court clerk an application for legal aid, saying: "Unfortunately, he is unable to sign it."

The hearing lasted just four minutes and Mr Kelly was remanded in custody until December 10. He slowly left the room accompanied by a prison officer and a nurse to return to the secure unit in the hospital.

MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Heavy burden for a little committee

It is 14in long, 5in wide and 5in high. It weighs about 20lb. It arrived in two jumbo manilla envelopes, tied together with eight rubber bands. It comprises, I reckon, 2,000 to 3,000 pages of mostly closely printed typescript.

"What is all this about parcels?" you ask. "Did the Commons not meet on Friday to debate the Queen's speech? What of foreign affairs to be discussed yesterday? What of the important new measures signalled by Her Majesty to deregulate Britain and make a bonfire of red tape for discussion later? Was our sketchwriter not in the Chamber?"

I was not. Nor, unless they plan to lock themselves away from their constituents for the next four days, were the MPs who serve on the joint committee on statutory instruments. We were all reading. For each of them will have received, like me, an identical parcel. It is a little light reading for their meeting in committee room seven at 4.30pm next Tuesday.

How can they even read, let alone understand all this? How can this meeting, a regular occurrence, be the first and last look Parliament gets at the great bulk of red tape and regulation that its own legislation is spawning out, semi-digested, every week. Be anything other than a sham? Acts of Parliament, these days, tell you nothing. But the powers they give ministers to make orders are immense. It is these — the "statutory instruments" (SIs) that Parliament can really do little more than nod at glumly as they pass — that are now the nub of modern policy-making.

MPs cannot possibly drag each SI through the Chamber. So they have set up a joint committee with

the Lords to take a look at them. The committee cannot possibly read them all, so it leaves its clerk to do so. The clerk cannot really digest the lot either: they light on a few, for closer enquiry. The thing has all the thoroughness of the new "ring of plastic" protecting the City of London from terrorists in cars. Clerks are conscientious civil servants. Technical errors will usually be spotted. But the larger political questions — should this minister be making this order at all? Isn't this new regulation taking a sledgehammer to a nut? — will seldom be asked.

It is not working. The scandal is one of the great, unremarked disgraces of our modern constitution. There is far, far too much. One poor little committee cannot possibly attend to it all. Not to half of it: not to a tenth of it: not to a hundredth. I know. I sat on the joint committee for years as an MP. The whips asked me to do it, no doubt to make me feel useful. I was useless. So were most of the others.

Look at next Tuesday's afternoon's meeting! The agenda alone runs to 11 pages. There are some 171 SIs to consider, the longest of which runs to 188 pages. Besides imposing sanctions on Liberia, they provide for the seizure of animals, the inspection of motor vehicles, and a hundred other concerns. Some trivial, some vast. The committee does its best. But its chairman, Andrew Bennett, sharp sighted and thorough, would admit it is forced to bite off more than it can chew.

Yesterday in the chamber, MPs debated foreign affairs. Colourful opinions were expressed, for this is the surface of our legislature. Underneath, race whole navies of nuclear submarines, going the other way.

Tests boycott to continue

The National Union of Teachers announced overwhelming support yesterday for the continuation of its tests boycott. Doug McAvoy, general secretary, said problems of "workload and educationally unsound tests" had not been resolved. Baroness Blatch, education minister, said parents would find it difficult to understand the union's reasoning.

Shop-workers' rights

Tory backbench pressure has forced the government to include additional employment protection in proposals for new Sunday trading laws. In an attempt to win over wavering Tory and Labour MPs, the government yesterday announced that future as well as present shop-workers would be able to refuse to work on Sunday. Leading article, page 19

Rocket case remand

Two brothers appeared before Cardiff magistrates yesterday charged with the murder of John Hill, 67, of Merthyr Tydfil, Mid-Glamorgan, who died when hit by a marine rocket at the World Cup match on Wednesday. Andrew McAllister, 30, a carpet fitter, and Kerry Still, 34, an electrician, both of Wrexham, Clwyd, were remanded until November 26.

Armed raider jailed

A man serving seven years for armed robbery carried out five armed raids on unsupervised one-day shopping trips, the Old Bailey was told yesterday. Steven Marchant, 36, of Islington, north London, was due for release from Down View Prison, Banstead, Surrey, in May 1995. He admitted three charges of robbery and was jailed for nine years.

Father gives himself up

A man yesterday gave himself up to police 36 hours after a warrant was issued for his arrest, following the Child Support Agency's decision to increase his maintenance payments from £7 to £144 a week. Tony Pye, 35, of Fleetwood, Lancashire, was granted police bail until he attends the town's magistrates' court on November 30.

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مكتبة من الأصل

Cool and cunning murderer shows no remorse for helping lover with woodland execution

Bored housewife sentenced to life for killing husband

By EDWARD GORMAN

A HOUSEWIFE who sought to escape her boring marriage by helping her lover to stab and bludgeon her husband to death was jailed for life yesterday.

Sandra Wignall, 48, was sentenced by the Old Bailey at the end of what has been called the "Foxes in the Woods" trial. She had lured her 55-year-old husband into a trap on the pretext of feeding a vixen and its cubs.

In the woods near the couple's Surrey home Wignall's accomplices, her lover Terry Bewley, 43, and Harold Moul, 42, attacked Robert Wignall with a block of wood and a fishing knife,

stabbing him twice through the heart.

Wignall, described as a "cool and cunning" murderer who was without remorse, was sexually obsessed with Bewley. She hoped to start a new life after the killing with the help of a £21,000 insurance policy on her husband's life.

She showed no emotion yesterday as Judge Neil Denison handed down life sentences to her and the two men. All three were convicted of murder.

As the verdicts were announced relatives of Robert Wignall hugged each other in the packed public gallery. His daughters by his first mar-

riage, Denise and Debbie, wept as the jury returned their verdicts.

After the hearing one of Mr Wignall's daughters spoke of her contempt for the woman who had killed her father. Debbie Philpott said: "We've all got small children and I hope she'll become insignificant in the end. She had deprived us of our father and five small children of their grandfather. I refuse to let her ruin our lives any further than that — it's over."

His other daughter, Denise Campbell, 30, said: "Life is not long enough, but we are pleased with the result."

Det Supt Pat Crossan, who

led the murder enquiry and who was at first deflected by Wignall's plausible portrayal of a newly married woman robbed of her husband in a brutal and unprovoked attack, said that he was delighted for the Wignall family that the ordeal of the trial was now over.

"It's been traumatic for them," he said. "Perhaps now they can get on with rebuilding their lives and their children's lives."

Mr Crossan added: "The evidence showed that she was cool and cunning and had planned her husband's death." He said that he had nothing but praise for the eight women and four men of the jury, who after assessing a mass of evidence over the past three weeks had reached the right conclusion. He also underlined that none of the defendants had shown any remorse.

"They showed nothing — no emotion whatsoever. I think in the public interest that certainly all these people had to be put away."

Wignall, of Addlestone in Surrey, Bewley of Rustip in west London, and Moul, of Ladywood in Birmingham, were led silently from the dock flanked by five prison officers.

It emerged at the end of the trial that Bewley, a balding, thick-set individual who had worked as a chauffeur and held an almost demonic sexual spell over Wignall, had a previous conviction for murder in 1971. He strangled Lillian Shapiro, a debt collector whom he owed £50, and served 11 years of a life sentence before being released in 1982.

Addressing the court before sentencing, Andrew Trollope QC, for Wignall, spoke of what he called the extraordinary combination of events that had driven her to plan and carry out the murder plot. Many had spoken of her warmly as an attractive and outgoing person. Despite her "truly dreadful crime" she posed no threat to the public at large. He described her actions as extraordinary and possibly beyond "ready discovery".



Sandra and Robert Wignall on their wedding day. Her love for him soon waned



Wignall's lover Terry Bewley, right, and Harold Moul, his accomplice

Lawyer says Jackson's painkiller addiction is bogus

FROM CHRISTOPHER GOODWIN IN LOS ANGELES

AS THE search for Michael Jackson continued yesterday, Larry R. Feldman, the attorney for the 13-year-old boy who has accused the singer of sexually molesting him, produced evidence casting doubt on claims that Jackson is addicted to painkillers.

Mr Feldman filed papers in the Los Angeles courts which included a sworn statement from Howard Manning Jr, a Los Angeles attorney who represents clients suing Jackson in an unrelated copyright matter. Mr Manning spent ten hours taking testimony from Jackson on November 8 and November 10 in Mexico.

Jackson's attorney, Bertram Fields, has claimed that at this time Jackson's addiction to painkillers was "life-threatening" and that he was "barely able to function adequately on an intellectual level". However, Mr Manning's statement said: "During the direct examination by his counsel and cross-examination by us, there was no indication that Mr Jackson's ability to function on an intellectual level was in any way impaired."

Mr Feldman has accused the singer of using his alleged addiction to delay the case. This allegation is denied by Jackson's lawyers. They say he will return to America in six to eight weeks to answer any charges against him. None has been filed to date.

The claims by Jackson's attorneys, however, were backed up in a statement made by another of his lawyers, Eve H. Wagner, who met Jackson on November 7. She said: "He was glassy-eyed, could hardly stay awake, had difficulty holding physical objects and seemed unable to focus on the issues I needed to discuss with him."

Police are understood to be interested in talking to two doctors, David Forester, a British doctor who said earlier this week that he was treating Jackson for addiction in London, and the Beverly Hills dermatologist Arnold Klein, who has treated Jackson for vitiligo, a skin disorder.

Sexual obsession and greed that led to death

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE "Foxes in the Woods" trial uncovered a tale of sexual obsession and greed which drove a suburban wife to plan and take part in the murder of her husband of just nine months.

Sandra Wignall, was besotted with Terry Bewley, her accomplice, with whom she conducted an affair before and after her marriage.

She played a crucial role in her husband's death, performing a sex act on him while Bewley and his friend Harold Moul were waiting to pounce, armed with a fishing knife and a lump of wood.

Robert Wignall, a painter and decorator who had three children and five grandchildren from his first marriage, was described by a neighbour as a very nice man. He was killed in September last year.

At first, police believed his wife's story that the couple had been out feeding foxes in woods near their home at Addlestone in Surrey, when three men approached and attacked Mr Wignall.

Sandra Wignall's story was that they had been confronted by the men, one of whom

asked if they had seen a stray puppy. She told detectives her husband was then set upon, telling her to run for her life. She returned and found his body lying in a pool of blood. He had been stabbed twice through the heart.

Police had no reason to doubt the apparently heartbroken woman. She gave interviews to the media to try to help track down his killers and even took part in a televised reconstruction of events leading to the killing.

What detectives did not know was that Wignall, hatched by her marriage, had hatched the plot in order to resume her affair with Bewley and cash in on her husband's life insurance policy.

Christine Willis, a former neighbour and confidante of the convicted woman, told the court how Wignall had met Bewley in 1988 and of their affair. The prosecution described Wignall as a woman for whom sex was all-important and who had become obsessed with Bewley; she resumed the affair nine days after getting married.

Ms Willis told the court: "She saw him two or three

times a week. She would take Bob [Mr Wignall] to wherever he was working and drive over to Terry's and be back in time to pick Bob up when his day was finished. She said marrying Bob was the biggest mistake of her life because now Terry was offering her more than he had previously and was saying he loved her," Mrs Willis added.

The lure of her lover proved too much for a woman who had grown bored with a husband with whom she rarely had sex.

Sandra Wignall's story fell apart because there seemed to be no motive for the murder. It was established that Moul had burnt the blood-spattered clothing, destroyed the lump of wood and dumped the knife in a canal. Bewley had set fire to the car they had used.

Moul confessed to police after being charged, admitting that he had agreed to help his friend "frighten Bob off so Bewley could continue his affair with Sandra". Wignall admitted her part in the murder to her brother when he visited her in prison while she was on remand.

Row brews over Independent reshuffle

By A STAFF REPORTER



Taverne due for maternity leave

THE Independent newspaper yesterday sought to contain a row over the future of its finance director, Suzanne Taverne, who has been asked to resign a month before her baby is due.

Insiders say Ms Taverne, who was appointed finance director in March 1992, has been told her position is to be filled by Graham Luff, the current managing director, whose own post has become redundant with the appointment of Patrick Morrissey as chief executive in September.

Ms Taverne, due to begin 12 weeks of maternity leave in a few weeks' time, has been told that she can work out her one-year notice period at the

newspaper in her original role of strategic planning. Her colleagues perceive this as a demotion.

Officially the changes flow from a management restructuring following the appointment of Mr Morrissey at The Independent.

However, staff at the paper claim that a clash of working philosophies may also have been to blame.

The Independent is a participant in Opportunity 2000, the campaign launched by the government in 1991 to persuade employers that women should be represented at all levels of companies.

The newspaper, which was revamped last month with an

increased cover price of 50p, announced earlier this year that it was refinancing.

It is believed to be seeking new investment of between £15 million and £20 million. So far there appears to have been no firm offer.

Ms Taverne is the daughter of the former Labour MP, Dick Taverne. She graduated from Balliol College, Oxford, in 1982, and was widely seen at the university as one of the brightest graduates of her year.

Newspaper Publishing, the owner of The Independent and its sister paper, The Independent on Sunday, refused to comment on the matter yesterday.

Lamb takes strike against Lord's over cheat claims

By JOHN YOUNG

THE England cricketer Alan Lamb yesterday accused the game's authorities of trying to hide the full facts concerning allegations of cheating by Pakistan players in last year's series.

At a news conference after Thursday's out-of-court settlement of a libel action brought against Lamb by the former Pakistan fast bowler Sarfraz Nawaz, Lamb's solicitor, Alan Herd, said Test and County Cricket Board officials had failed to co-operate and had been reluctant to see officials give evidence.

Sarfraz's case rested on an alleged conversation with Lamb in 1979 or 1980, in which he was said to have explained how he could get an old ball to swing by illegally roughening one side. Much evidence related to last year's matches between England and Pakistan, in particular the one-day international at Lord's. Lamb subsequently accepted in court that Sarfraz had never cheated.

The court was told that the authorities had failed to produce the suspect ball or the umpires' report. Yesterday Mr Herd said: "We subpoenaed the TCCB to see the ball and the umpires' reports but they simply did not want to do it."

"The board are very concerned about the image of cricket. I said it might be better for the game's image if any form of cheating were revealed."

Don Oslar, the third umpire at Lord's, told the court the ball had been changed under Rule 42, which deals with illegal tampering. The match referee refused to disclose the reason for the change but Intikhab Alam, the Pakistan

manager, claimed it was because the ball gone out of shape. Lamb said that statement had provided him to "blow the whistle" in a Daily Mirror article on August 26 last year.

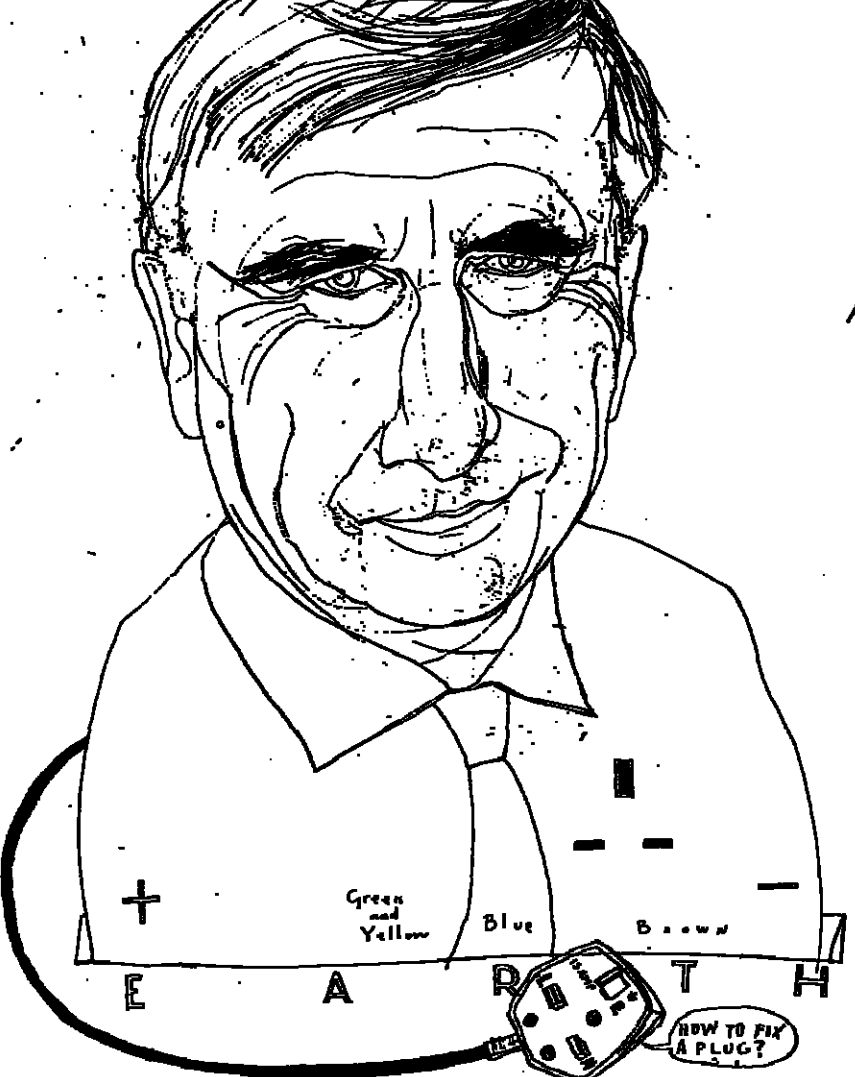
Mr Herd said yesterday that players and officials were reluctant to provide written statements because they feared they might breach their TCCB contracts. David Gower and Graham Gooch, former England captains, had been subpoenaed to appear on Sarfraz's behalf and had sought the board's advice as to what they should do.

Before hearing Lamb's comments, Alan Smith, TCCB chief executive, said: "We tackled the issue of ball tampering more than 12 months ago. The board has not been directly involved in the dispute and was not party to the proceedings. The board's principal concern has been to support its umpires and, in particular, to preserve the confidentiality of its reporting systems with them and the finality of their decisions."

Alan Lee, page 37

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Record heroin haul seized in M1 swoop

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S largest single seizure of heroin, worth up to £30 million, was discovered yesterday when Customs investigators and armed police stopped a lorry at the Scratchwood service area on the M1 near London.

On board the lorry, which had been driven across Europe from Turkey, searchers found 200kg of heroin hidden under floorboards in the trailer. The cache compares with a total seizure by Customs and police of 550kg in 1992.

The lorry arrived at Dover a week ago after driving from Turkey through Bulgaria and then from eastern into western Europe along a smuggling trail now known as the Balkan route. Customs officers known as the Zulus had intelligence that a load was on its way and set up Operation Zarzuela to wait for it.

The articulated lorry was carrying a cargo of tomatoes and was driven to Liverpool.

■ A lorry-load of tomatoes arriving from Turkey concealed the largest single haul of heroin yet found by Customs officials

The official cargo was unloaded and Customs and police officers waited to see if the lorry would be approached for the drugs.

They watched the consignments for a week, hoping they would be led to a main distribution network. But the heroin remained untouched and it is thought the traffickers got cold feet, something went wrong, or they discovered the cargo was under surveillance.

Eventually the lorry was driven south towards London, still under surveillance. There was concern that the drugs might be driven out of Britain again so Customs officers decided to strike.

Seizures of heroin have been low so far this year. In recent years there has been evidence that the drug was coming back into favour. London, Merseyside and

Manchester provide the main English markets. During the past year, Turkish traffickers have made a number of attempts to move large quantities of the drug into Britain using heroin from opium produced in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Several consignments have been stopped at Channel ports.

The Turkish producers dominated the British market about 15 years ago and then lost ground to Asians. Now the Turks have re-appeared with better quality heroin. The smugglers use vehicles with hiding places and take several weeks to prepare exports.

A Customs spokesman said a 33-year-old Turkish lorry driver is to appear tomorrow at Thames magistrates court, east London, tomorrow, charged with importing heroin.



Customs officials display the 200kg of heroin worth up to £30 million seized from a motorway service area yesterday

NEWS IN BRIEF

Caller tells police of man's body

The naked body of a man was found in his flat at Shepherd's Bush, west London, yesterday after an anonymous call to police. Police believe John Fanning, 38, unemployed, who lived alone, had been strangled.

The caller said he had met the victim at a nightclub. Police said there were no signs that the flat had been broken into. A Yard spokeswoman said a homosexual link was only one of several lines of enquiry and that the death was not being linked to a series of gay murders in London earlier this year.

Court clerk stole £10,000

Susan Rawlings, 45, chief clerk at St Austell County Court in Cornwall, was jailed for a year after admitting the theft of over £10,000 from her department to cover stock market losses. She had taken cheques sent to cover court fees and later exchanged them for cash in her department.

PC jailed

Martin Wilson, 28, from Cromer, Norfolk, a constable at Stoke Newington police station, north London, was jailed for nine months at the Old Bailey for dangerous driving and acting to pervert the course of justice. Wilson, who had been drinking, had overtaken the crew of a police car at 70mph, driven the wrong side of traffic islands and caused other motorists to swerve on the North Circular.

Low flyer

Bruce Hook, 47, a former RAF pilot and British Air Race champion, was fined £2,100 after flying so low he clipped a fencepost and caused two air cadets to dive out of the way at Bembridge airport, Isle of Wight, during the National Goodyear Trophy Race in June. He admitted three charges of flying his Chipmunk aircraft negligently.

Hunt challenge

The British Field Sports Society is to challenge the hunting ban on Hampshire County Council land. The society seeks a High Court judicial review of the ban on behalf of Mark Andrae, joint master of the Hampshire Hunt.

Jeweller raided

Raiders emptied a jeweller's safe in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, after knocking a hole in a wall overnight from an empty building next door. When a shop assistant arrived, she was forced to open the safe.

Profile says serial rapist could kill

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A SERIAL rapist who wears women's underwear during attacks could kill if he is not caught, a consultant psychologist says. The man, aged 45-55, struck in Streatham in 1987, Clapham in 1991 and Wimbledon in April last year.

Dr Paul Britton, a specialist in producing profiles of offenders, said: "It is very important for whoever may feel that they know this person ... to understand how real the risk is that he will rape someone else, and during the rape he may kill someone."

Police believe the man has committed other rapes and have appealed for victims to come forward. Det Supt Brian Younger said police wanted to trace distinctive items of jewellery stolen from the Clapham house, including a silver abacus pendant.

In Clapham the rapist left a message in red lipstick on a wall. The message, in capital letters, used three types of A, one like an H with a straight line across the top.

The man has a vertical scar on his abdomen and piercing, watery blue eyes. He is about 6ft tall, slim, with powerful shoulders and grey hair.

Boys in Bulger case 'had murder in mind'

By RONALD FAUX

THE two boys accused of James Bulger's death went to the Strand shopping centre in Bootle intent on murdering a child, the jury at Preston Crown Court was told yesterday.

Richard Henriques QC, closing the case for the prosecution on the fourteenth day of the trial, said the boys, then aged ten, had together led, pulled and dragged the injured James away from every adult they had encountered and away from assistance which was almost continuously at hand.

The boys deny abducting and murdering James and attempting to abduct a second two-year-old from the precinct on the same day, February 12.

Mr Henriques said the boys were together when James sustained his terrible injuries. Could one have conceivably been committing the crime on the railway while the other was present and innocent?

Would the non-partner in crime behave so coolly after the event and maintain such a lying stance, protecting the killer in interview after interview with the police? "We submit most certainly not."

Both boys had persistently lied because they feared the truth, he said. "If you are sure they have lied with no innocent motive, those lies are evidence of their guilt."

Mr Henriques said 38 witnesses who saw James with the boys had been asked in court why they did not intervene. "Each witness would have asked themselves that question a thousand times and would have continued asking it. We trust that they will find some comfort that no one else intervened, all making the same false, but reasonable assumption that this was a family group and that the toddler had been entrusted to the older boys."

The trial continues.

What manage meant

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

COUNCILLORS manfully turned their backs on political correctness yesterday and overturned a decision to ban the word manager from staff job descriptions.

Labour-controlled Plymouth council denied that public scorn had forced it into a U-turn, saying its original intentions had been misinterpreted in sexist terms.

The council's personnel sub-committee had recommended that the title of posts containing the word manager be amended in consultation with the head of personnel and equal opportunities. The recommendation was approved

on Monday but after consultation with staff it was decided that most managers should keep their titles.

John Ingham, the council leader, said: "The issue has been blown out of proportion. There was no hidden agenda, no suggestion of political correctness and certainly no intention of making this a sexist issue. Our sole aim was to sweep away old practices which have increasingly become a barrier to the delivery of services to Plymouth."

Tom Jones, a Conservative councillor, had accused Labour of introducing "mand police" to the council.

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Neighbour joked with hard-working teacher who drove bus: 'You'll kill yourself if you keep this up'

Police say cause of school crash may never be known

By Bill Frost

ANOTHER child injured in the M40 minibus crash died yesterday as police investigating the accident that has now claimed 13 lives said its cause may never be known.

Katie Murray, 13, had been seriously ill since the collision near Warwick. Another girl, Charlene O'Dowd, died in hospital on Thursday. The condition of two more children in hospital was described as stable.

Accident investigators do not think that driver fatigue or excessive speed were contributory factors. Weather conditions were said to have been reasonable and investigators are satisfied that the eight-year-old minibus was in good running order, having been given a MoT certificate a fortnight earlier.

However, a neighbour has told of her concern over the long hours worked by Eleanor Fry, the teacher who was driving and who died with her pupils. Rosemary Petheridge said: "Eleanor had no time for a boy friend because her life was so full of her work for the children and the church. Her life was so busy. I often had to leave her notes for when she popped home. It sounds awful now, but one of the last notes I left her said jokingly, 'You will kill yourself if you keep this up'."

Miss Fry had travelled from her home in Stourbridge, West Midlands, to Hagley High School at about 7.30am. After taking morning classes

she set out with her pupils for the 260-mile round trip to London. She telephoned her neighbour from the Royal Albert Hall to ask if she would feed her dogs. Miss Petheridge said yesterday: "She rang some time around 9pm to tell me she wouldn't be home until about 1am. She sounded very cheerful and bright as usual."

A motorist who saw the accident, Pat Molloy, said: "I was about half a mile behind the minibus when it crashed, good and there were no other vehicles on the motorway there at the time."

Mr Joslin said that investigators had no evidence to suggest fatigue played a part in the accident, which happened at junction 15 near Warwick. Eleanor Fry would have been driving for only about two hours. A post-mortem examination had "suggested no reason or cause or contributory factor for the accident."

As pupils arrived at Hagley High yesterday they gathered in groups to comfort each other. Many carried flowers to add to the scores of bouquets and sympathy cards at the main entrance hall. Some were in tears as teachers tried to console them.

The Pope yesterday sent his sympathy to the families of those who died. The Vatican statement said: "The Holy Father was deeply saddened by the news of the tragic deaths and injuries caused by the road accident involving children and adults at Hagley High School."

The Pope asked that assurances of his "sympathy and prayerful closeness" be conveyed to the bereaved.

"I was waiting in the school car-park," said Mr Pagett. "Someone tapped my window and told me there had been an accident. I was asked to go into the vestibule where other parents were waiting. The headmaster, Mr Hill, informed us there had been fatalities involving children at the school. I just wanted to know if Richard was one of the survivors. A



Pupils yesterday studying bouquets brought to Hagley High School in tribute to their classmates and teacher who died in the minibus crash

'I'm sorry, your son was not among the survivors'

By A Staff Reporter

JOHN Pagett yesterday recalled the moment a priest told him his son had not survived the M40 minibus crash. Mr Pagett was one of the first to arrive at South Warwickshire Hospital after the accident.

"I was waiting in the school car-park," said Mr Pagett. "Someone tapped my window and told me there had been an accident. I was asked to go into the vestibule where other parents were waiting. The headmaster, Mr Hill, informed us there had been fatalities involving children at the school. I just wanted to know if Richard was one of the survivors. A

priest asked me to fill in some details on a form. He came back and said 'I'm sorry, your son was not among the survivors.'"

His 12-year-old son had lived life to the full. "Richard was a very active lad and a keen swimmer and horse-rider. He had gone to the concert because he was learning to play the trumpet and hoped eventually to get into the school orchestra. The children had been returning from the Schools Prom at the Royal Albert Hall. Next year he was planning to go on an Outward Bound course. He was always doing something."

Clutching a portrait of Richard, Mrs Pagett broke down as she spoke to

reporters. "He had a lovely personality. I think the only way we can try to come to terms with what has happened is to keep talking about Richard."

Charlene O'Dowd's parents spoke yesterday of their talented daughter's battle for life. Peter and Zara O'Dowd were at the 12-year-old's bedside when she died at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Thursday.

Mrs O'Dowd said: "She fought for 18 hours and she did not want to leave. She was so talented as an actress and a singer and had managed to pack a great deal into her short life." Mr O'Dowd broke down several times as he spoke about his daughter. Charlene

was involved with the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-upon-Avon. "All the actors loved her," Mr O'Dowd said. "She had a great time with the company. She had done a lot even though she was so young. I took her to Berlin before the wall came down and she shook the hand of an East German guard through a hole in it."

Mrs O'Dowd said: "I can't believe this has happened. Charlene was my world and my life." The couple had celebrated their 14th wedding anniversary on Wednesday night, before Mr O'Dowd set off for school to pick up Charlene, the eldest of their four children.



Eleanor Fry: phoned neighbour about dogs



Katie Murray: died in hospital yesterday

Tiredness 'causes 25% of M-way accidents'

By Tim Jones, Transport Correspondent

HUNDREDS of miles of motorways are still without service stations and rest areas in spite of research figures showing that driver fatigue is a major cause of accidents.

A study carried out by Professor James Horne, director of sleep research at Loughborough University, suggests that up to a quarter of all accidents on motorways and trunk roads could be attributed to tiredness.

It is possible to drive for more than 130 miles on the M40 and associated link roads without encountering a service area in spite of signs warning that fatigue can kill. Edmund King, of the RAC, said yesterday that it was astonishing there were no service or rest areas along the M40, the M42, the M54, the M20, the M11 or the M23. He joined the AA in calling for legislation to ensure that no stretch of road or motorway is built without service stations being included in the planning

stage. Although the transport department is in favour of that policy, it has often, as in the case of the M40, been thwarted by local authorities refusing planning permission.

Both motoring organisations said there should be pull-off stops provided for at least every 30 miles of motorway. John Stubbs, of the AA's research department, suggested yesterday that manufacturers could do more to stop cars bursting into flame on collision. EC law enabled manufacturers to "impact-test" with engines and lights switched off. "It would be a better test with the engine running," he said.

A recent report by the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association said steps should be taken to use more fire-resistant materials, particularly in the passenger compartment, and to find ways of inhibiting fire and fumes spreading from engine bays to passenger areas.

Media attacked over distressing pictures

By Bill Frost

LIVE television coverage and front-page photographs of children grieving the loss of schoolmates in the M40 minibus crash drew fierce public criticism yesterday.

Callers to the Press Complaints Commission were told that an investigation could be mounted only after written complaints had been received.

Television viewers expressed disquiet over a live ITN interview in which Paul Hill, headmaster of Hagley High School, broke down as he spoke of the pupils who had died. He recovered his composure, but only after millions had seen him weep.

Sources at *The Independent* confirmed yesterday that an enquiry was underway after many readers had been disturbed over the use of a front-page

photograph of a near-hysterical child. A member of staff told one caller: "You are just the latest in a steady stream of readers to complain today."

Another staff member said: "We seem to have been the main source of complaints over the use of pictures. It was thought to be right at the time — it was a collective decision."

Angry callers inundated the London commercial radio station LBC with complaints about ITN's live interview with Mr Hill on Thursday lunchtime. But yesterday the 55-year-old headmaster praised the media coverage.

"In the circumstances of the last 24 hours, myself, my staff and the school have been treated with sympathy by the media and we would like to express our thanks," he said.

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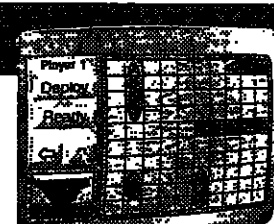
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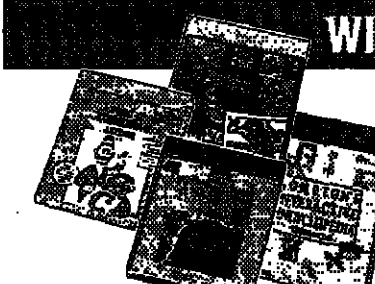
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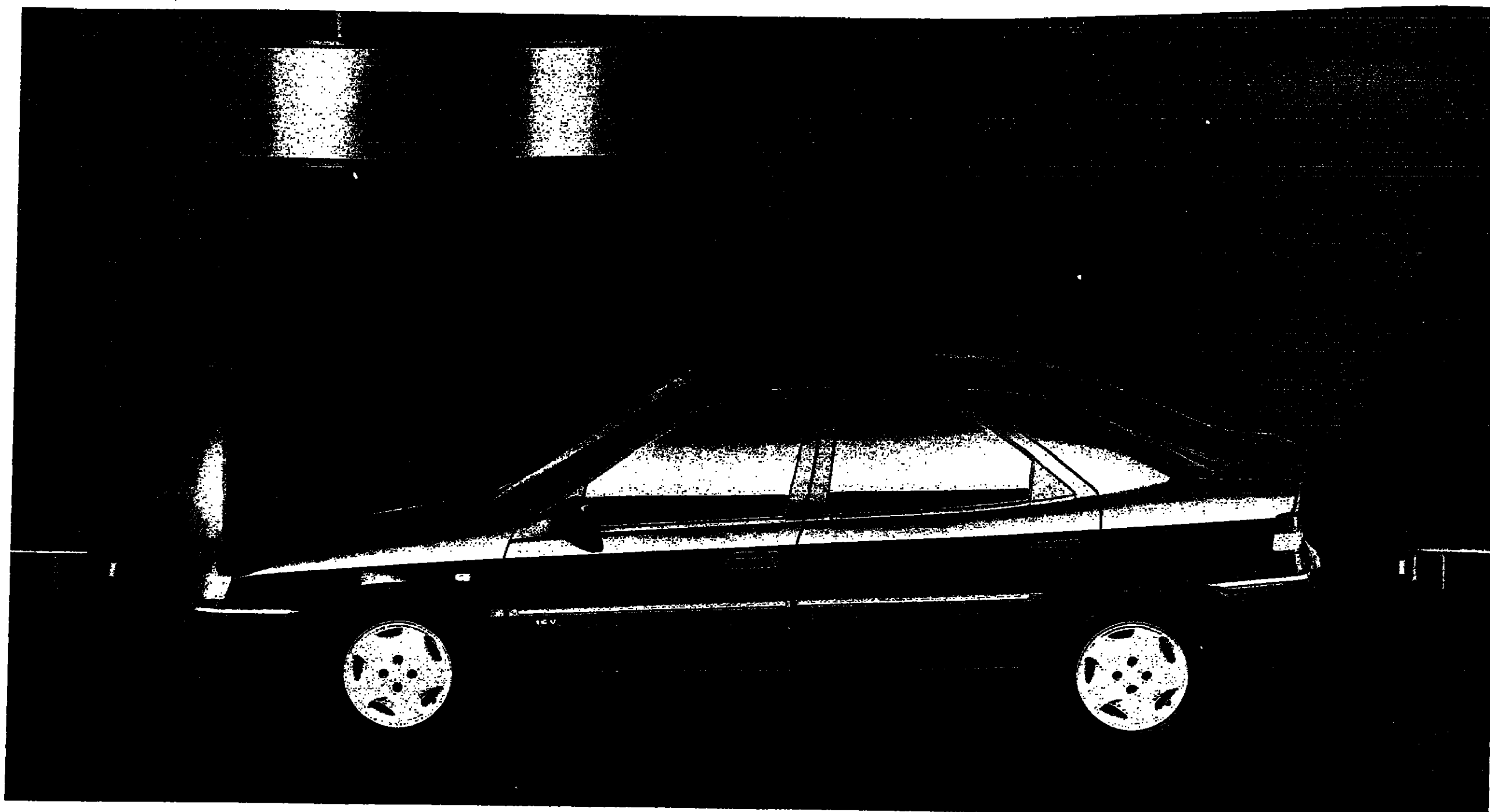
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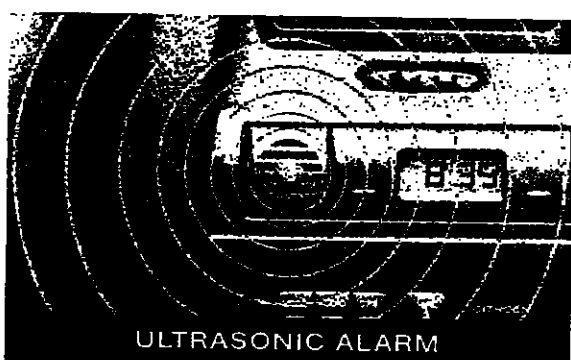
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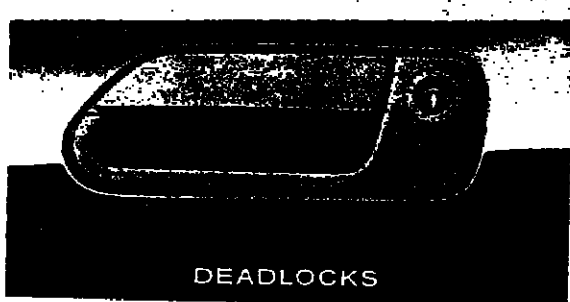


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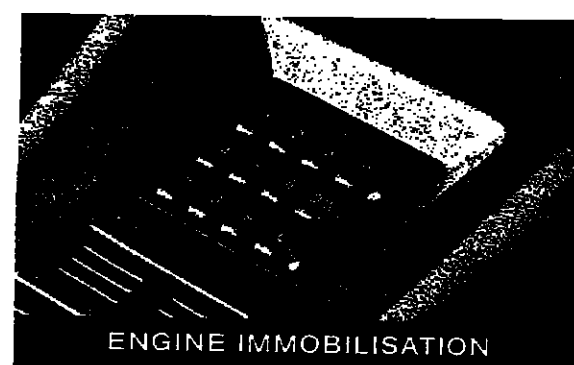
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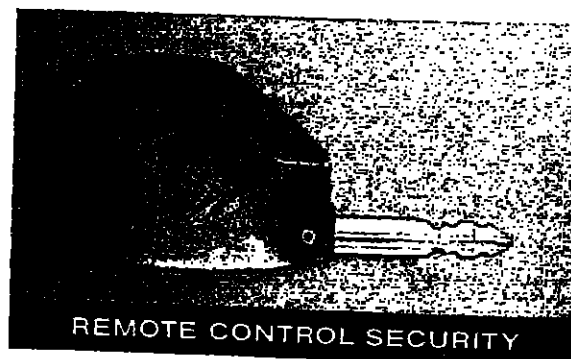


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Catholic bishops open door to Rome for Anglican rebels

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to welcome dissenting Anglican clergy and laity into the Roman Catholic Church were published yesterday by the Catholic bishops of England and Wales.

After a week-long meeting, the Catholic bishops unanimously endorsed the "Roman option" for Anglicans unable to accept the ordination of women priests, extending a "warm welcome" to all who wished to convert. More than 150 Anglican clergy have already approached Catholic bishops with a view to taking the Roman option.

More than 30 Church of England clergy have resigned since last November's vote by the general synod to ordain

women priests, and many more are expected to go when it becomes legally possible to ordain women priests after February 22 next year.

Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, said: "We have resolutely refused to play the numbers game... All I am interested in is discerning God's will in this matter."

The difficult question of the validity of Anglican orders appears to have been successfully resolved by the bishops, but a question mark still hangs over the future of married Anglican clergy. Steps are also being considered to allow group conversions of a vicar and his parish, where the group could stay together as

long as it wished. Cardinal Hume, who will fly to Rome next month to discuss the proposals with the Pope and senior Vatican officials, made it clear that Anglican clergy would have to be re-ordained to become Catholic priests, but that did not constitute a denial of their former ministry.

He said: "They will not have to say 'no' to the ministry they have exercised up until now, but we hold that priesthood in the Catholic church is something different."

Ordination into the Catholic church was necessary because "you cannot, when dealing with the sacraments, have any doubts whatsoever", he said. "You have to have total certainty."

Avoiding any hint of triumphalism over the difficulties the Church of England is facing, Cardinal Hume said: "Just as we are not in the numbers game, so we are not in the power game. We are a church trying to be a servant of the people. We are there to serve, prompted hopefully by the Holy Spirit."

In Rome, Cardinal Hume will attempt to obtain a sympathetic hearing for the many Anglican clergy who are married and wish to convert. At present, special dispensation from Rome has to be obtained in each case, and this process can take months or years.

The proposals are largely the work of Cardinal Hume, Dr Alan Clark, Bishop of East Anglia, Bishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor of Arundel and Brighton, Bishop Vincent Nichols of North London and Fr Michael Jackson, secretary of the committee for Christian unity, who have met regularly over the past few months. The Right Rev Patrick Kelly, Bishop of Salford and a senior theologian, worked closely with Dr Clark in the early stages.



Christopher Saunders, who plays Fox in the Royal Ballet double bill of *Ballet Imperial* and *Tales of Beatrix Potter*, opening tonight at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, with his six-month-old son Peter, whose mother Tracey Brown has just returned to the corps as a soloist

Writers pen plea for arts grant clemency

By ALISON ROBERTS, ARTS REPORTER

HAROLD Pinter, Arnold Wesker, Alan Ayckbourn and other established playwrights have written to the heritage secretary asking for his support against government cuts to the arts.

The letter questions the government's promise to keep the arts afloat. Signatories also include Trevor Griffiths, Willy Russell, Sue Townsend and Fay Weldon.

"Less than one quarter of 1 per cent of all government spending goes on the arts. Yet the government proposes a £5 million cut to the Arts Council which, accounting for inflation, is a real cut of £10 million," they write to Peter Brooke, the heritage secretary. "May we ask for your voice in supporting us against this?"

The playwrights' salvo is

the latest in a series of protests against the proposed arts cut. The campaign will come to a head next Tuesday, a week before the Budget, in which the cut is expected to be confirmed, when a host of arts figures will lobby Parliament.

Earlier this week Mr Brooke gave the clearest indication yet that the arts would suffer when he publicly admitted that funding was at "if not a crisis, a crunch."

Extracts from recently discovered music manuscripts by Henry Purcell will be performed by the London Baroque Players at the Queen Elizabeth Hall during the South Bank Centre's two-day Purcell Experience.

Letters, page 19

Christians must reject insidious culture of contempt

Credo

Dr John Habgood

How in a few words can one sum up the current malaise of our society? Donald Nichol got it right, I believe, in a recent issue of *The Tablet* in which he coined the phrase "culture of contempt".

Revelations in recent political memoirs, including Lady Thatcher's own, of the contempt in which she held many of her cabinet colleagues, prompted him to reflect on how they in turn have exhibited contempt for teachers, doctors, nurses, miners, railway workers and others whose particular skills and experience have so frequently been brushed aside in the making

of policy. The culture of contempt can seep into everything. Professionalism can be eroded in the scramble to make money. Respect for those who are to be served can degenerate into cynical exploitation of their dependence.

When the editor of a newspaper, criticised for publishing dishonestly acquired photographs, apparently takes pride in calling himself a rathag, the culture of contempt seems to have reached its nadir. Contemptuousness breeds contemptibility, and if contempt flows from those in power, in the end it reflects back on themselves.

It would be foolish just to blame politicians for the culture shifts of recent decades,

or for the plight in which we now find ourselves. Politicians may help to set the tone of an era, but they are themselves constrained and influenced by deeper underlying social forces.

The culture of contempt has a long history. Its roots in the critical spirit of the Enlightenment have borne good fruit as well as bad. The readiness to question, to criticise, to be suspicious of power and vested interests, to refuse to rely on mere assertions of authority, have been formative influences in modern Western civilisation.

Science is essentially about the criticism of common sense. The unwillingness to take things for granted, or to be content with what we have, are the fuel for innovations and enterprise. In dreaming dreams of what might be, we implicitly criticise what is, and our freedom to do so and to re-order our lives cannot be separated from the exercise of

tough-minded scrutiny. But there is a worm in the apple. Criticism can become obsessive and corrosive, can automatically assume the worst, can slide into mere denigration.

The culture of contempt begins to take root when people feel free to criticise without any sustained attempt to understand what it is they are criticising. Contempt entails a refusal to listen and to learn, because the contemptuous assume that they know better than those they despise.

The media must accept their share of blame for this. The reliance on the soundbite, the quick summary and flip dismissal, the lazy-minded use of stereotypes, do not make for understanding. It may be that the media are themselves trapped by their own contempt of audiences and readerships, typified as looking mainly for excitement, scandal and entertain-

ment. But this is simply another example of how contempt can invade the fabric of a society and constrain those who in their better moments would like to resist it.

Learning to value people for what they are, to listen to them, to speak of them with respect and to safeguard their dignity, could begin to break this vicious circle of contempt. It would be encouraging, for instance, to feel that members of Parliament were actually willing to hear each other.

Christians may find that their own contribution has to be made on a deeper level, in contemplation of a Master who was himself "despised and rejected". But on whatever level, contempt has to be identified and rejected as an evil distortion of human relationships.

Dr John Habgood is Archbishop of York.

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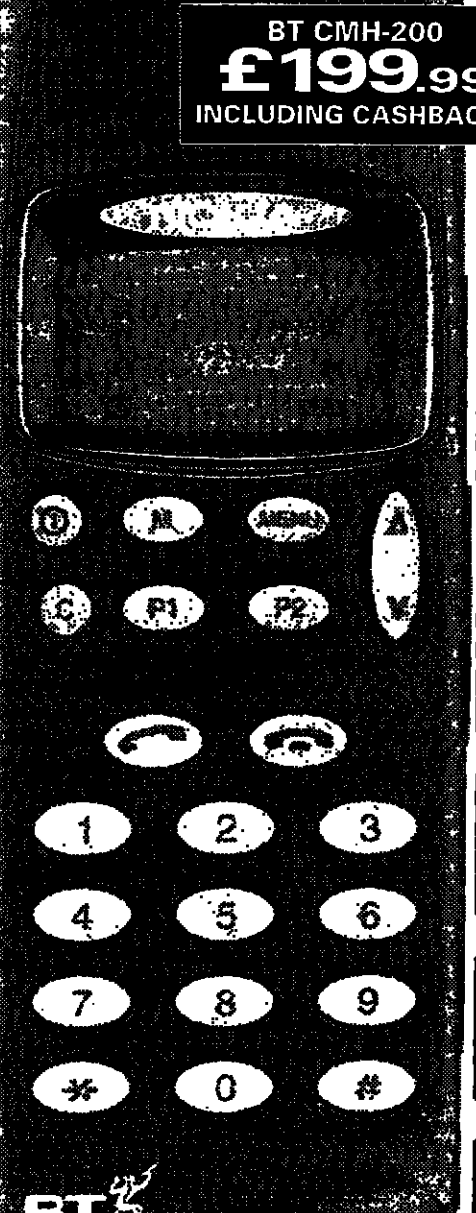
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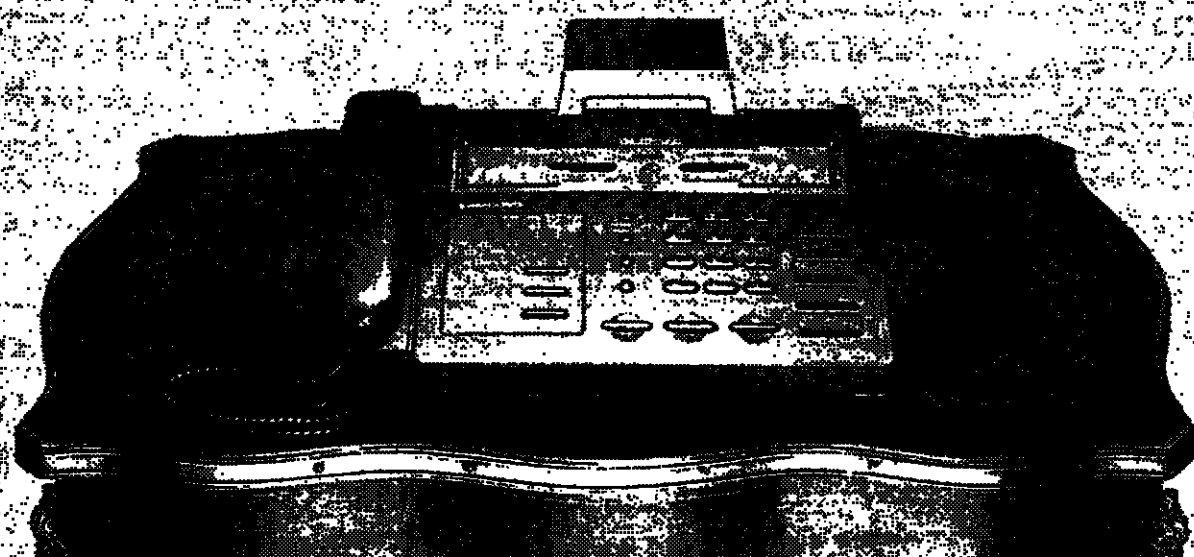
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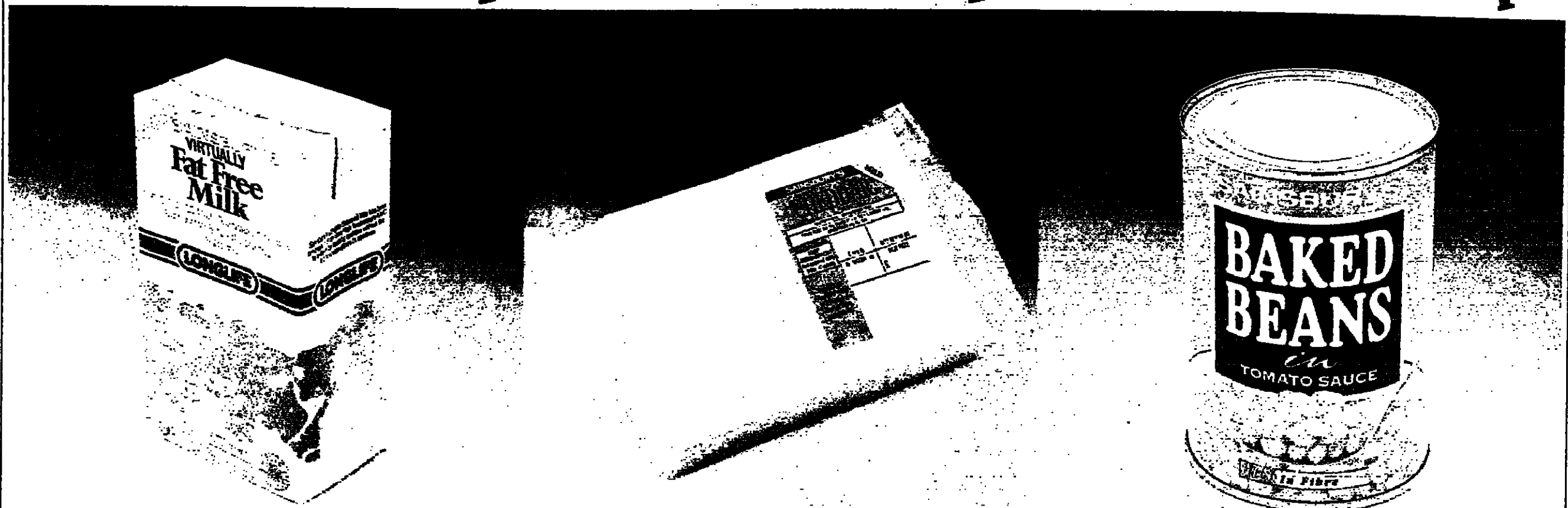
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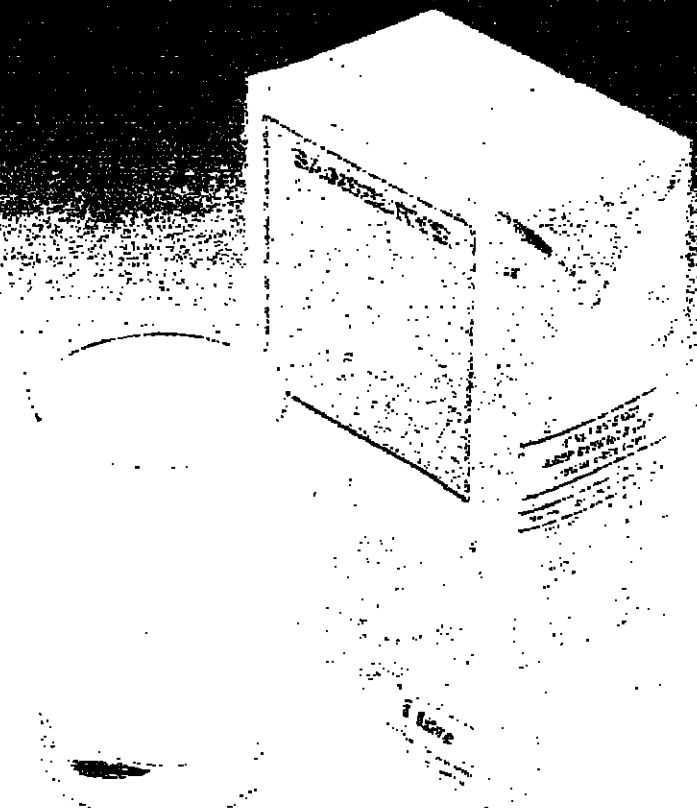
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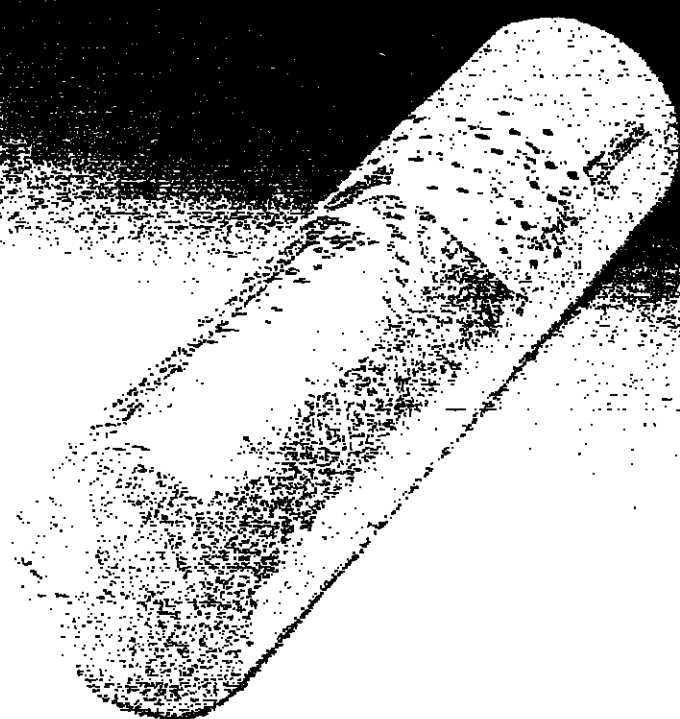
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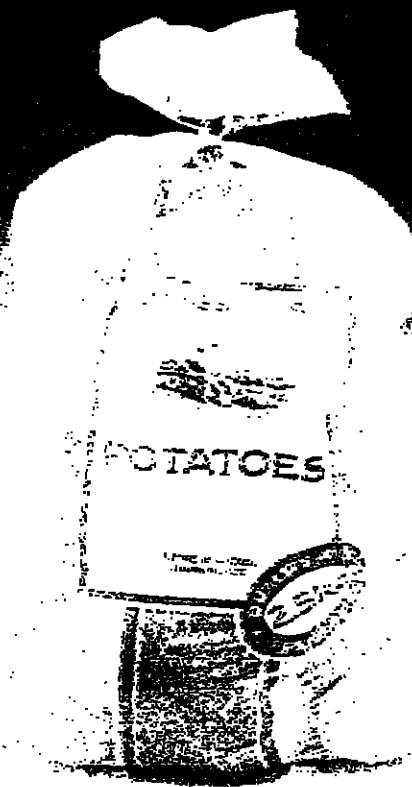
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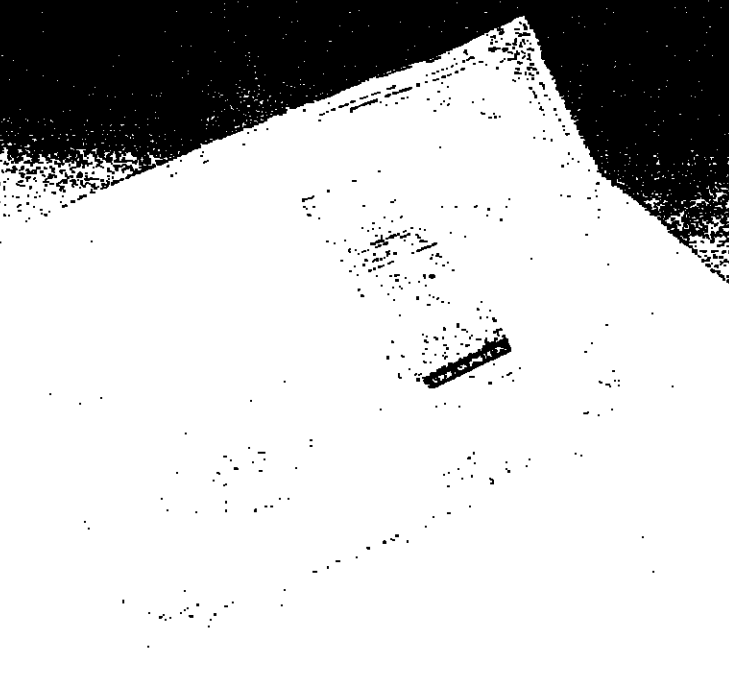
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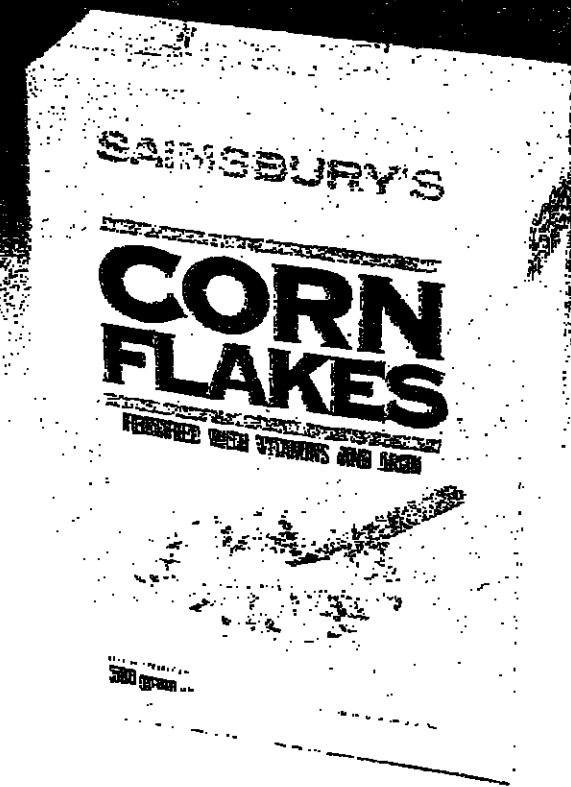
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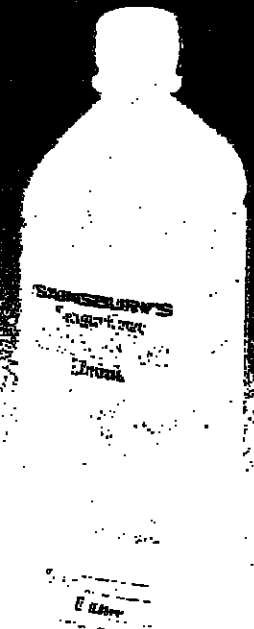
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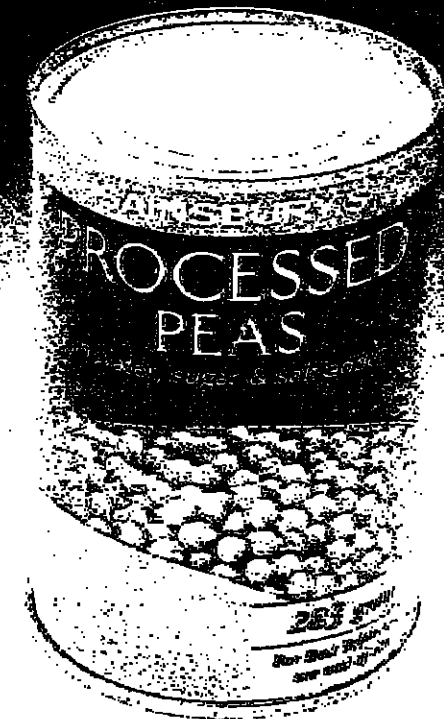
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Hurd wants progress in exchange for Bosnian aid

By JONATHAN PRYNN AND ROBERT MORGAN

DOUGLAS Hurd yesterday warned the leaders of the warring factions in Bosnia that humanitarian aid could not be guaranteed in the long-term without further progress at the negotiating table.

The foreign secretary, who was speaking in the Commons debate on the Queen's Speech, said it was "unrealistic" to expect the humanitarian effort in Bosnia to continue indefinitely "if the present political vacuum and lack of cooperation persists".

His comments provoked an angry response from Jack Cunningham, the shadow foreign secretary, who described Mr Hurd's warning on aid to Bosnia as a "grotesque error".

Dr Cunningham told the Channel 4 House to House programme: "It would be unthinkable to millions of people to say we are going to watch this happening on the boundaries and doorstep of Europe and not seek to mitigate the worst consequences."

David Clark, the shadow defence secretary, said Mr Hurd's comments suggested Britain was contemplating the withdrawal of its troops from Bosnia. "It is our view that British troops should stay in Bosnia as long as their mission is attainable," he said.

Earlier, Mr Hurd had admitted to MPs that failure to reach a settlement in the Geneva peace talks threatened a "humanitarian disaster" in Bosnia this winter. The foreign secretary conceded that the prospects for peace had receded in recent weeks and he called on the Serbs to make further territorial concessions to the Bosnian Muslims.

European Community foreign ministers meet in Luxembourg on Monday to discuss efforts to revive the stalled peace process. However, Mr Hurd stressed that, ultimately, only the Bosnian communities themselves could end the conflict. "The responsibility for ending the fighting rests with those who are doing the fighting," he said.

In a wide ranging speech, Mr Hurd paid particular attention to the importance of Britain's links with the fast growing economies of the Far

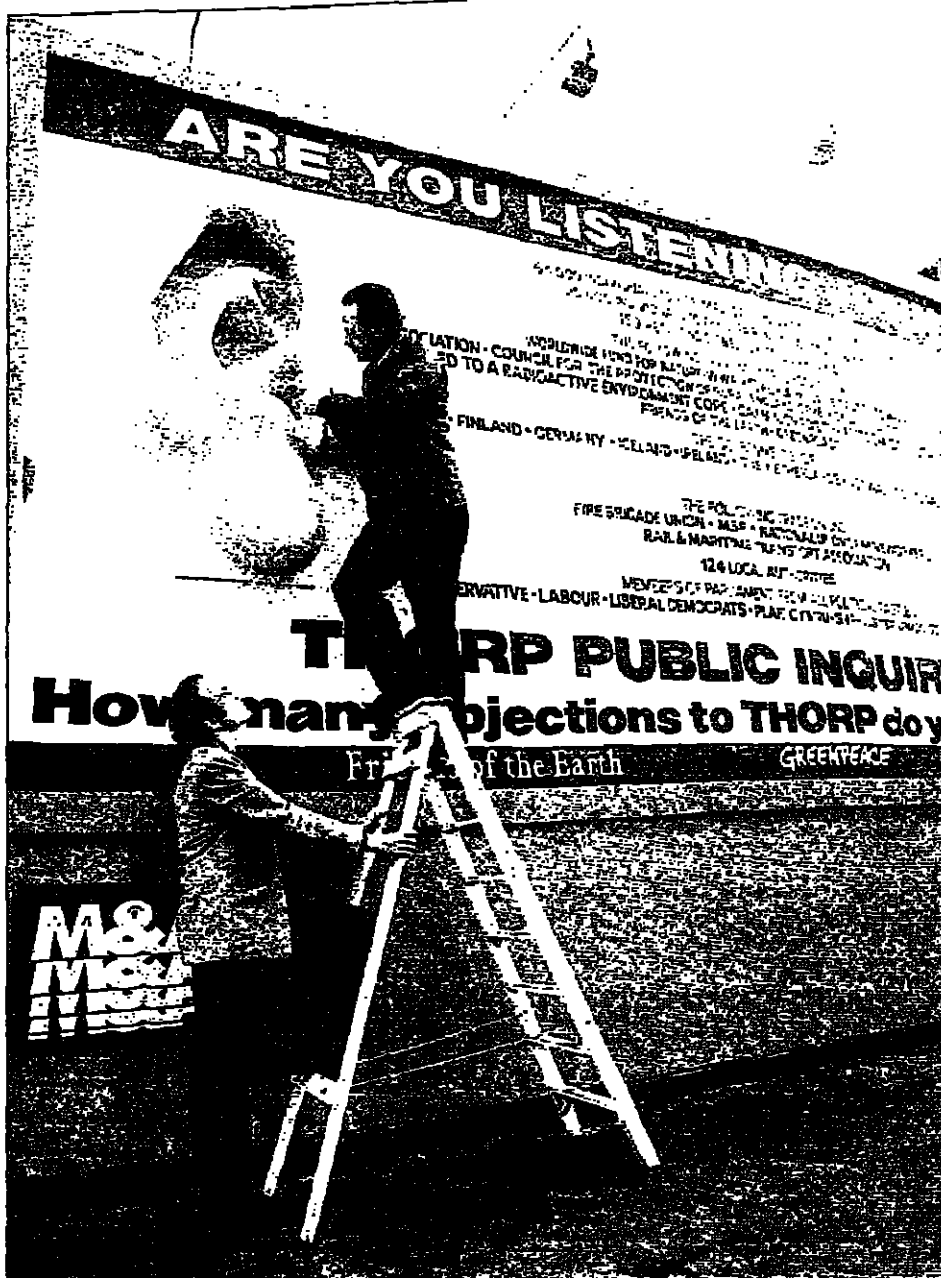
East, whose prosperity "had struck everyone's imagination". The government had raised the priority of Asia in its foreign policy, he said, to help firms take advantage of the massive trading opportunities in the region.

Dr Cunningham, speaking during the Commons debate, castigated the government for its failure to fulfil its election pledge to increase aid to developing countries. He said the government had no intention of keeping its commitment to increase aid to the UN's target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product.

Dr Cunningham went on to attack Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, for his criticism of other EC nationals in his Tory party conference speech at Blackpool. "There's a lot of festering going on in the cabinet about our attitude and our approach towards the EC," he said.

Sir David Steel, for the Liberal Democrats, highlighted a "massive degree of schizophrenia" inside the cabinet over the government's policy on Europe.

Grim reminder, page 13



John Gummer gets an earful from Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace over demands for a public enquiry into the opening of the Thorp nuclear reprocessing plant, on a poster unveiled yesterday opposite the environment department

MacGregor speeds sale of airports

By JILL SHERMAN

JOHN MacGregor is to give private companies the right to buy shares in regional airports as part of the government's drive to attract private finance into the public sector.

The move paves the way for the privatisation of Britain's 26 municipally-owned airports by allowing firms to buy a minority stake in any of the state holdings.

The transport secretary failed in his attempt to get an airport privatisation bill into the Queen's Speech, but is determined to press ahead. Under regulations to be laid before Parliament later this year, restrictions hampering local councils who wish to sell shares to private firms in order to get extra capital to invest in upgrading or expansion will be lifted. Earlier this month Mr MacGregor accepted that the legislative timetable was already overcrowded.

The new regulations form part of the "stick and carrot" approach which Mr MacGregor has adopted towards local government.

This year local councils received only about £12 million to spend on airports, barely enough to cover minimum health and safety measures. The transport secretary had been expecting that rules which allowed local councils to use 100 per cent of their capital receipts till the end of this year would encourage them to sell off their airports. From January local councils will be allowed to use only 50 per cent of their receipts,

unless further changes are announced in the Budget.

If local authorities fail to sell off their assets voluntarily in the next 12 months, Mr MacGregor intends to introduce legislation next year to force councils to privatise their airports when they might no longer be able to spend their receipts. As a result of the financial squeeze so far, Birmingham has combined with British Airways to build a new terminal and East Midlands was recently sold to National Express. Cardiff, Bristol, Belfast and Plymouth are also said to be considering selling their airports.

"There is no reason why public money should be spent on airports, which can be run perfectly acceptably by the

private sector, rather than on kidney machines," said one ministerial source.

Today Mr MacGregor will tell Tory party members that he plans "further liberalisation of international aviation and encouraging the privatisation of local authority airports". Speaking in Harrogate, Mr MacGregor will say that although no transport legislation was mentioned in the Queen's Speech, he has a vast programme to implement next year.

He will shortly be publishing a white paper giving the go-ahead to motorway tolls. Legislation is expected to be included in this Parliament although the electronic tolls are unlikely to be in place for four or five years.

BMA fears plan to cut invalidity benefits

By JILL SHERMAN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DETAILS of stringent new medical tests for invalidity benefit claimants will go out for consultation to the medical profession early next month, immediately after the Budget.

The test will be more rigorous than existing procedures and will result in thousands being disqualified from receiving the benefit. The move is expected to be strongly opposed by doctors.

Several cabinet ministers are concerned that the move, enshrined in the invalidity benefit bill to be announced on December 1, could prompt a damaging public backlash. The three-month consultation exercise will proceed alongside the early passage of the bill, which could get its second reading before Christmas and go into committee during January and February.

Under the new arrangements, family doctors will no longer have discretion as to whether their patients are eligible for payments which go to the long-term sick who are unable to work. Part-time doctors appointed by the Benefits Agency medical services will now carry out the tests and determine whether the individuals can claim benefit.

Those who fail to qualify will be transferred to the less generous unemployment benefit. The medical profession has insisted that the final decision is not made by the GP because of the risk to patient/doctor relationships.

However, they are worried that the decision of Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, to put the Benefits Agency medical services out to tender could discredit the scheme. The British Medical Association has written to Mr Lilley saying the successful contractor might be subjected to undue pressure to cut costs.

The bill is also expected to lengthen the qualifying period before people can claim invalidity benefit from six months to a year and offer new applicants less generous payments.

Letters, page 19

Be an angel

Making a Will is perhaps the last thing on your mind right now. After all, you plan to go on enjoying life for a good many years to come. However, no-one can avoid the inevitable, which is why, for peace of mind, it makes sense to make a Will sooner rather than later. Presently, there are over 80,000 people with Multiple Sclerosis in the UK who rely on donations to help improve their quality of life. As yet there is no cure for this cruel disease. If you leave money for The Multiple Sclerosis Society once you have no further use for it, you will help us take a step closer to finding a cure, and help care for the welfare of these people.

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Solo sailor sets out to cut 100 days off Chay Blyth's record

By Barry Pickthall
YACHTING CORRESPONDENT

TWENTY-two years after the British yachtsman Chay Blyth became the first to circumnavigate the globe non-stop against the prevailing winds and currents, Mike Golding, 33, a former fireman, is setting out tomorrow to retrace the course in an attempt to knock 100 days off Blyth's record of 292 days.

On the face of it, Blyth's walking-pace average of 3.84 knots for the 27,000-mile voyage should be simple enough to break.

Golding's yacht *Group 4 Securitas* is well proven and 8ft longer than Blyth's original ketch-rigged yacht *British Steel*.

It is also equipped with the latest labour-saving electronic self-steering systems and reefing equipment, which was not available to Blyth.

Although several have attempted to break the record since, none has succeeded in doing so non-stop. The closest was fellow Briton David Scott Cowper in 1982, who beat Blyth's time by 71 days but not without stopping in the Falklands to make repairs to his 41-footer *Ocean Bound*.

Golding is going into this adventure with his eyes open, having covered the course last winter as skipper of the same yacht in the British Steel Challenge.

Then he took 151 days to return to Southampton but had a crew of 13 to help along the way.

"It will be tough, particularly in the Southern Ocean, when I will be beating into the Roaring Forties. I will be relying heavily on my self-steering."

"If that fails as it did with Chay when he was off Cape

Loneliness is the biggest challenge facing a former fireman planning to circumnavigate the world the wrong way

Horn, I'll be sunk. He somehow managed to complete the final 20,000 miles steering by hand but my boat is just too big to do the same," Golding says.

His other great concern is handling *Group 4's* enormous sail plan alone.

"When there were 14 on board we could tack the boat in 30 seconds or raise and lower the spinnaker in under a minute. But alone, it takes me 20 minutes just to tack, and I'm exhausted at the end of it."

"My greatest dread is if the wind is from the southwest tomorrow, forcing me to short

"When there were 14 on board we could tack in 30 seconds... alone, it takes me 20 minutes and I'm exhausted at the end of it"

tack out of the Solent," he said. Golding's other worry is the effect of loneliness.

"I've made two solo transatlantic crossings but the longest I have been at sea alone is 27 days. The first week will be

the toughest and probably off New Zealand, the half-way point across the Southern Ocean, when friends plan to come out to meet me."

"There is bound to be a strong urge to give up then," he said.

The rules for a solo circumnavigation are simple: according to the World Sailing Speed Record Council, which monitors all attempts, the sailor may not receive any kind of outside assistance, nor take on board any supplies, materials or equipment.

The sailor may anchor or beach the boat to make repairs but cannot be helped in any way.

The sailor is permitted to drop film and mail but cannot receive letters in return. To

relieve the boredom, Golding has packed his boat with books, music tapes and six videos.

"I'm treating myself to watching one a month," he says, although he has no idea whether he has the will-power to wait the allotted time to watch his favourite *Fawlty Towers* and *Mr Bean* tapes.

For music, he has packed everything from the classics to The Cure, his favourite punk band, and selected a variety of books from science fiction to the memoirs of Lord Carrington.

"I'm also looking forward to reading *Ranulph Fiennes' Mind over Matter* and am going to make another attempt at completing Stephen Hawking's tome *A Brief History of Time*. I've never got further than chapter five be-



Mike Golding prepares *Group 4 Securitas* for his solo journey. The craft has the latest electronic self-steering systems and reefing equipment

fore." Another important book is Blyth's *Impossible Voyage*, his harrowing account of the voyage two decades ago.

"That is going to be my bible because I am racing Chay against the clock," the sailor

says. Blyth set off on his voyage from the same buoy marking the entrance to the river Hamble on October 18. By the time Golding sets off at 1pm tomorrow, Blyth would have been halfway down the

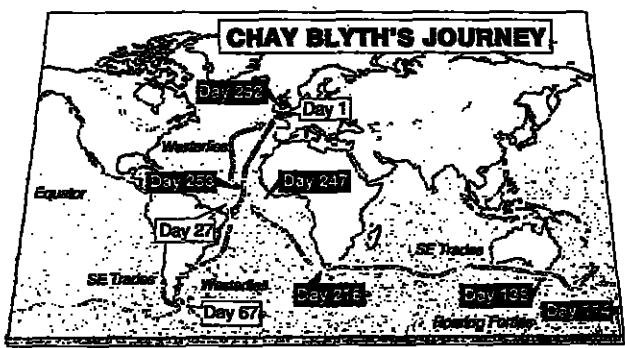
Brazilian coast. "He rounded Cape Horn on December 25 but if all goes well, I hope to catch him before New Zealand," Golding says of the race to clip 100 days off Blyth's time. "Blyth himself could not

have been more supportive. He has given me a great deal of advice and helped me to prepare the boat," Golding says of his mentor.

And his best piece of advice? "Pack plenty of candles!" Chay

Blyth told Golding, knowing that at sea for such an extended time anything, especially the worst, is likely to happen.

Whitbread race, page 38
Lawrie Smith, page 44



THE TIMES

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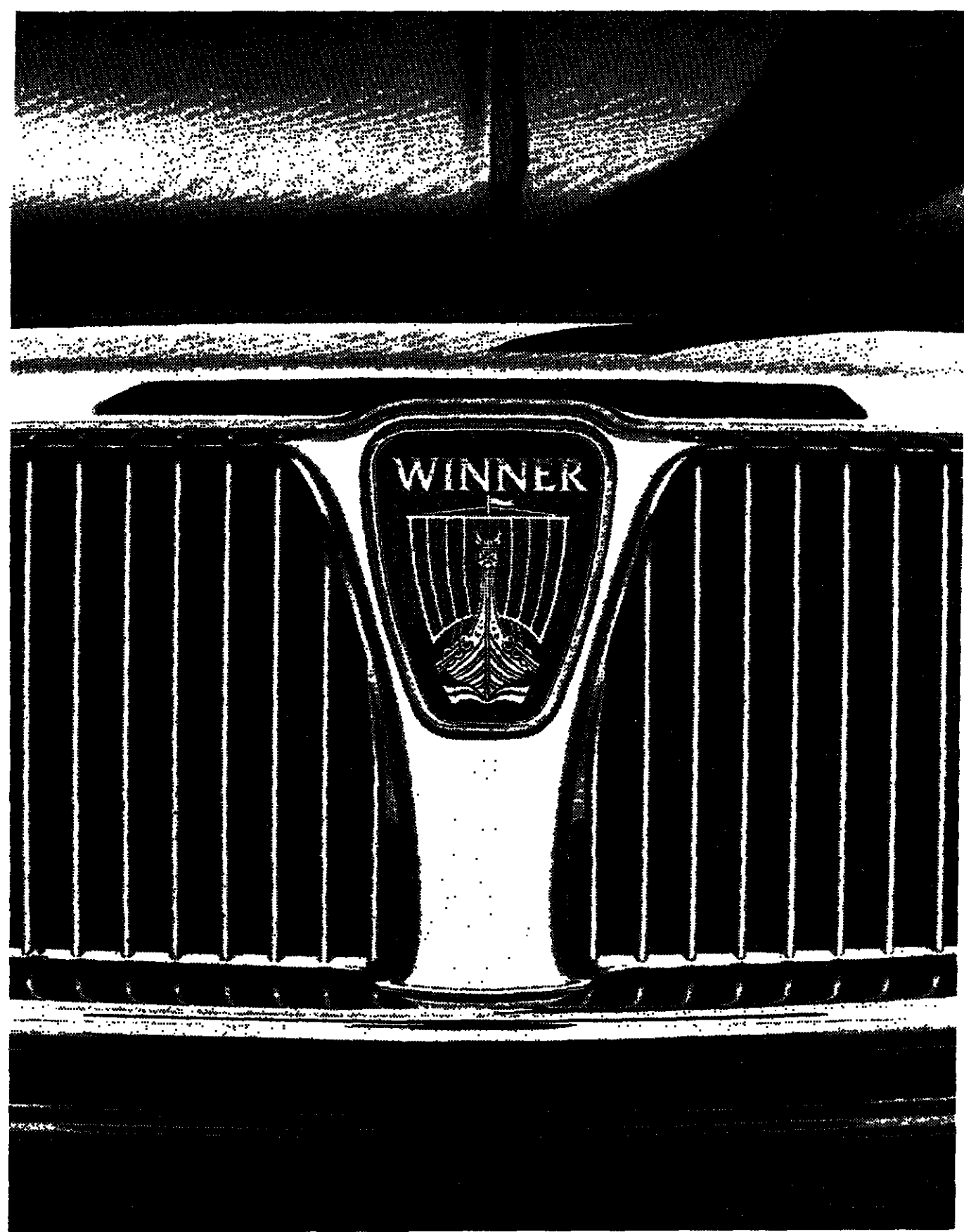
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Body of Glasgow lawyer found bound and burnt in flat

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

A LEADING prosecution lawyer for Scotland has been found dead at home, his body tied up and set on fire.

Marshall Stormonth, 34, a deputy procurator fiscal, was found at his Glasgow home on Thursday morning, but his body was so badly burnt that police were not able to identify him formally until late that night. They have launched a murder enquiry.

Mr Stormonth was a homosexual but police would not say whether his death was connected with homosexual activities. They refused to disclose the extent and nature of his injuries or the cause of death. His body was discovered after police and firefighters were called to the flat in the West End of Glasgow that Mr Stormonth shared with another man.

On the night before his death, Mr Stormonth, who was acting for the prosecution in a case at Glasgow Sheriff Court, had gone with Crown

colleagues to the Tron Theatre bar in the city centre. One of his companions, Paul McBride, an advocate working on the same case, said that it was a normal after-work social occasion.

"I had never met Mr Stormonth prior to this case, but I found him a down-to-earth and pleasant man, very good company," he said. Mr McBride said the group left the Tron at 11.30pm and he understood that Mr Stormonth was going to take a taxi home.

The trial in which Mr Stormonth was acting was adjourned on Thursday when he failed to appear. It was resumed yesterday with one of his colleagues. A trial in which another colleague was acting was also adjourned because she was too upset to continue.

Andrew Normand, the regional procurator fiscal based in Glasgow, said that Mr Stormonth was "an able deputy, popular in the office and

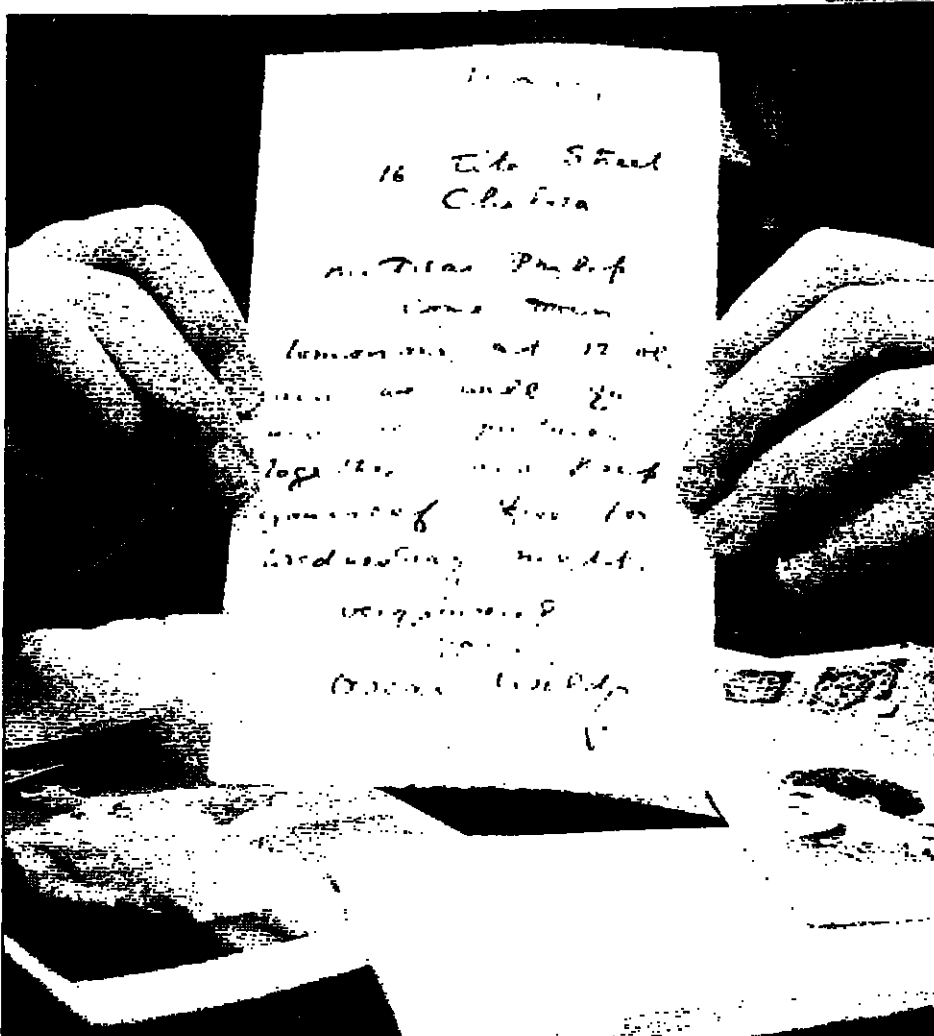
in the court scene in Glasgow. Our sympathies go to his family." Mr Stormonth was born in Greenock, Strathclyde, and educated in Falkirk, Central, where his father, a retired police chief inspector, had worked. He graduated from Edinburgh University and trained with an Edinburgh law firm before joining the fiscal service in 1989.

A self-taught Gaelic speaker, he was a founder member of the Lothian Gaelic Choir. He sang tenor and was a frequent prize-winner at the National Mod, the annual Gaelic competition.

His sister Aileen, 25, who lives in Oban, Strathclyde, said: "I'm totally shocked. How could someone have done this? We were extremely close."

He was extremely likable and very Gaelic-oriented.

Police have appealed for anyone who was in or around Botanic Crescent late on Wednesday to come forward.



Two letters and a signed photograph sent by Oscar Wilde between 1884 and 1885 to a previously unknown friend, Philip Griffiths, pictured right foreground, were sold for a total of £18,700 at Christie's, west London, yesterday

Mail order defies EC single market

By Robin Young

THE European single market is a myth, at least according to a new survey of the mail order business across the Continent.

The European consumers' organisation, BEUC, yesterday published a survey that demonstrated the reluctance of many large mail order companies to supply customers across national boundaries. It also disclosed price differences between countries of up to 40 per cent for the same product charged by the same company.

BEUC made 45 cross-border requests for catalogues from 28 different companies. Thirteen of the 45 requests received no response. 16 were refused because the companies said they could not send catalogues from one country to another and, of the 16 catalogues received, only 11 were actually sent from one member state to another. The other five were sent from the local affiliate in the customer's country of residence.

BEUC then placed 34 cross-border orders for a total of 88 products. Nine of the 34 orders were never acknowledged and 16 were refused. Only nine products were finally received.

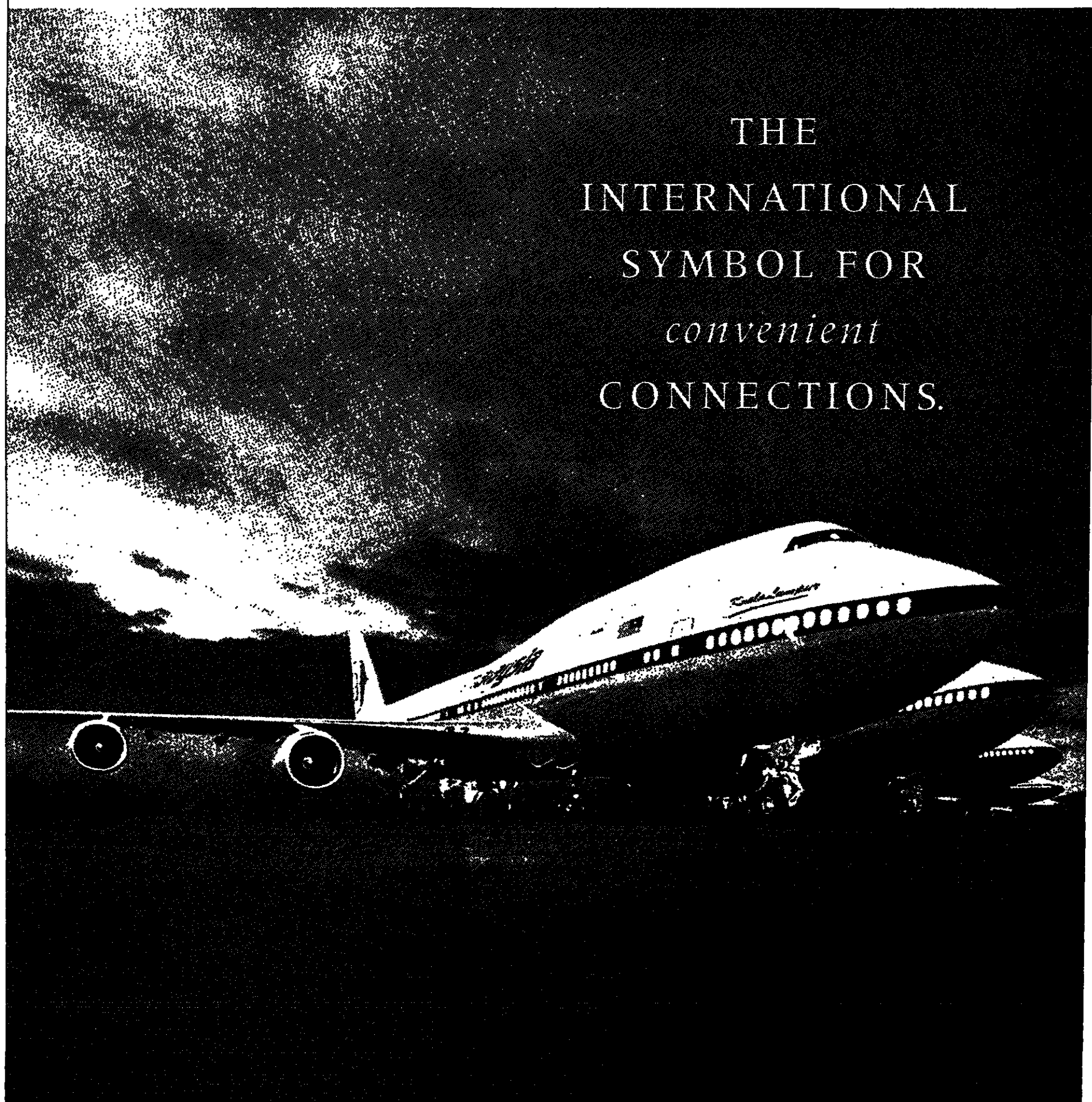
and of these only three were sent cross-border.

In one case where a Eurocheque was cashed but the goods never supplied, the cost in bank charges and exchange-rate spreads deprived the customer of almost a seventh of the total payment when a refund was received.

Comparing catalogues issued by the same companies in different countries, BEUC found that contents and layout were usually identical. But a watch sold by Franklin Mint (UK) cost 48 per cent less than the identical article from Franklin Mint (Belgium).

"Mail order should be one of the most practical ways for ordinary customers to benefit from the single market," Monique Goyens of BEUC said yesterday. "There are no practical obstacles preventing a company from sending catalogues and products to customers anywhere in the EC. Yet the larger the company the less likely they are to provide any such service. The study suggests many companies set their national catalogue prices not on a cost basis, but according to the trend in each national market."

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KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S newest grandmaster, Matthew Sadler, 19 from Chatham, Kent, highest rated player in the Junior World Chess Championships in Calicut, India, had a brilliant combination in his second-round win, starting with 18...Nx4 and ending in 34...Ra6+, a wonderfully geometric snaring of White's queen.

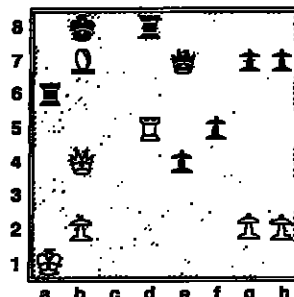
White: Richard Forster (Switzerland)

Black: Matthew Sadler

Sicilian Defence

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| 1 | e4 | c5 |
| 2 | Nf3 | d6 |
| 3 | d4 | cx4 |
| 4 | Nx4 | Nf6 |
| 5 | Nc3 | a6 |
| 6 | Bg5 | Nc8 |
| 7 | f4 | Bd7 |
| 8 | Qd3 | a5 |
| 9 | 0-0-0 | Bc7 |
| 10 | Be2 | Qc7 |
| 11 | Bf3 | Nxd4 |
| 12 | Qxd4 | Bc6 |
| 13 | Kb1 | 0-0-0 |
| 14 | Rhe1 | Rhe8 |
| 15 | Rd3 | Kb6 |
| 16 | h5 | Rc8 |
| 17 | a4 | a5 |
| 18 | Qc4 | Nxe4 |
| 19 | Nxe4 | d5 |
| 20 | Rcd5 | Bxd5 |
| 21 | Qxd5 | Qxc2+ |
| 22 | Ka1 | Qxe4+ |
| 23 | Kb1 | Bxg5 |
| 24 | Nxg5 | Rc7 |
| 25 | Rd1 | Qc2+ |
| 26 | Ka1 | Qd5 |
| 27 | Nc4 | Qe6 |
| 28 | Qc2 | h5 |

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 29 | Nd6 | Rd8 |
| 30 | Qd4 | a4 |
| 31 | Bc2 | Rcd7 |
| 32 | Bxb6 | Qe7 |
| 33 | Rd5 | Rd8 |
| 34 | Bxb7 | Ra6+ |



White resigns

Women's title

Xie Jun (China) has retained the Women's World Championship title against Nana Ioseliani (Georgia) in Monaco with the score of 8.5-2.5.

Tilburg

Vassily Ivanchuk (Ukraine) has joined third-round qualifiers in the knockout tournament at Tilburg, Holland, who already include Anatoly Karpov and Michael Adams.

Winning Move.
Weekend, page 18
Raymond Keene.
Magazine, page 68

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 20 1993
order defies
single market
BY ROBIN YOUNG

UN examines peace role in Bosnia as conflict drags on

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

AS THE first snowfalls and freezing temperatures grimly remind the suffering people of Bosnia that they must now face a second winter of war, the United Nations humanitarian mission is to come under closer scrutiny than ever before.

European Community foreign ministers in Luxembourg on Monday, and Nato defence and foreign ministers in Brussels in December, will have Bosnia at the top of their agenda, since any hope of a peaceful settlement in the next few weeks has all but vanished. Every day there are new apocalyptic warnings about the sufferings ahead for the three million in Bosnia who depend on humanitarian aid.

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, said yesterday that the relief operation could not go on for ever.

The three million people depend for their food, fuel, plastic sheeting, medicine and clothes on the UN Protection

Force (Unprofor) troops who escort the convoys through the war zones. Mr Hurd's warning was clear: if local warlords continue to obstruct the relief routes and there is no sign of a peace deal, the troops may have to be withdrawn.

Two thousand fresh British troops, mainly Coldstream Guards, have just settled in at the UN camp in Vitez. They are the third batch of British soldiers to serve in Bosnia.

Ministers initially envisaged that Britain's commitment would last 12 months. Now that it is to stretch to 18 months, there are fears that the quagmire could tie down British troops for years.

EC and Nato ministers need to judge whether the humanitarian mission — and the presence of foreign, neutral troops — is helping to sustain the war. Every male aged from 16 to 65 is eligible for call-up and food aid inevitably reaches them as well as the mouths of children and the

elderly. As one UN official said: "Soldiers from the warring factions fight during the day and then go home to be fed by their wives or mothers."

For the Coldstream Guards, the task of getting the aid convoys through has already run into trouble because the main supply route through the mountains from Split in Croatia is blocked by heavy fighting around Gornji Vakuf. This could ease now that the faction leaders have guaranteed the convoys' safe passage.

Since the first deployment of British troops in November last year, hundreds of thousands of tons of food and supplies have been escorted past hostile checkpoints and through crossfire. The Cheshire Regiment and The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire were confident they had saved thousands of lives. If there is anger and frustration, it is over the limitations of their mandate, not the mission itself.

Refuge for the Croat railway children



A Croat family looking out of the railway carriage which is their home at Capljina, south of Mostar, where about 270 refugees are living in 15 carriages. The central Bosnia battleground which they have fled is causing fresh concern to Nato commanders responsible for enforcing the

"no-fly zone" on behalf of the United Nations (Our Foreign Staff writes). Admiral Jeremy Boorda, commander of the Nato no-fly operation, said Croat military helicopters had been violating the ban around Vitez, where Croats have been fighting Muslims. Military officials said the helicopters

had been used to drop supplies to Croat forces. "We are concerned about the violations," a Nato spokesman said, but declined to say whether force could be used. Nato officials say some 250 violations of the no-fly zone, most of them by helicopters, have been recorded since the alliance began

enforcing the ban in April. But the Nato fighters have highly restrictive rules of engagement. With an eye to the refugees' fate, Japan meanwhile announced it would extend an emergency contribution of £12 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Ceausescu's drab shade still rules time-warp capital

FROM EVE-ANN PRENTICE IN BUCHAREST

The micro-skirted singer was attractive, but the beehive hair-do and lurid make-up jarred, and her six-man backing group played with more gusto than skill.

At midnight in the Dorobanti Hotel in Bucharest, the band made a glitzy entrance in the cavernous communist-era restaurant. There were only eight in the audience — and three of them left within seconds of the band's appearance. The bar closed within minutes. Someone somewhere was paying for the group to play to an empty room.

The episode was typical of life in post-Ceausescu Romania, where central planning seems to have given way to almost no planning at all. Ninety-five per cent of Romania's industry is still state-owned and few seem prepared to take responsibility for making decisions about basic levels.

This is in stark contrast to the changes which have taken place in neighbouring Hungary and in Poland. Even sanctions-trapped Belgrade appears a consumers' paradise compared with Bucharest. Buying a railway ticket is a nightmare. The uninitiated anxious to book a sleeper in

good time queue at the international window for an hour, pressed by chain-smoking bodies, only to be told that they may not book until two hours before departure.

So you queue again at the ordained time, but then the queue does not move an inch in an hour. Craning your neck to see the ticket-seller, you spy a middle-aged woman with greasy, dyed auburn hair, huge spectacles and a visage which leaves you in no doubt that her intent is to keep as many tickets as possible on her side of the counter.

But lest anyone should accuse her of sloth, she furiously stamps pieces of paper and gazes intently at an incongruous hi-tech computer. The queue grows fractious as departure time for the night train to Belgrade nears. The impatient begin poking one another in the back. All to no avail: The night train leaves without many of its would-be passengers. A colleague saved the day for our party by persuading a Serb guard to let us on board for a few German marks.

It is all reminiscent of the lunacies of communist-era East Europe. President Iliescu was a minister of Nicolae Ceausescu, and many say there was not so much a revolution at Christmas 1989 as a coup. But there are visible changes. A huge number of private roadside kiosks has given the dusty streets a semblance of gaiety, though most sell snacks and drinks West Europeans would find unpalatable.

And in the western city of Timisoara, where the embers of revolt were first lit, Italy's Benetton group is to open its first shop in Romania. But most Romanians cannot afford Western clothing prices on wages which average less than £40 a month.



Ceausescu: legacy of inefficiency remains

Insurers holed in bounty battle

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

AN ARMADA of insurers, including firms at Lloyd's of London, has failed to gain a fortune in gold and treasure from the SS *Central America*, which sank off North Carolina in 1857.

The companies claimed the treasure, discovered six years ago, because they had paid up promptly to clients when the paddle-steamer sank. A federal judge has ruled, however, that they deserve only a tenth of the booty, while the rest should go to the treasure-hunters who found the wreck 7,000ft under the Atlantic.

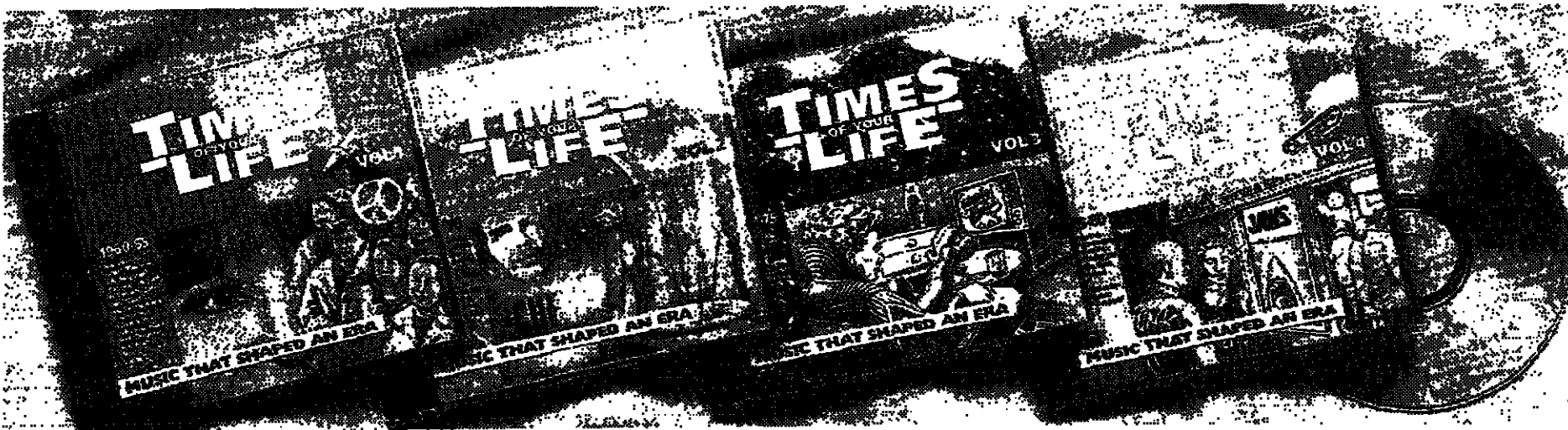
The ship, carrying miners and gold from the California prospecting fields to New York, was caught in a hurricane. Only 153 of the 578 passengers survived. Newspapers printed vivid reports of some men "flinging down their hard-earned treasure upon realising their impending doom". In 1987 the Columbus-

America Discovery Group, a salvage syndicate from Ohio, located the wreck using a robot and began to haul up thousands of \$20 Double Eagle gold pieces and other bounty, including a 62lb gold brick.

Sixteen insurers, including five companies from Britain, claimed at least 65 per cent of the treasure, but the salvage firm said the insurers had made no effort to recover the hoard, and accused them of "pin-striped piracy".

Judge Richard Kellam ruled on Thursday that the insurers deserve no more than 10 per cent of the proceeds. He valued the hoard at \$21 million (£14 million), a small fraction of earlier estimates, and noted that the treasure-hunters had already spent more than \$30 million. The sides have 30 days to come up with a plan for selling the treasure.

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Pacific summit to press EC on world trade deal

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER
IN SEATTLE

■ This meeting will send shivers down the spines of Europeans. Asian nations, keen to expand but also protect emerging industries, may be in for some tough talking, too

THE 17-nation Pacific rim summit in Seattle was yesterday preparing to intensify international pressure on the European Community, particularly France, to make the concessions required for the completion of a global trade liberalisation deal by the December 15 deadline.

Foreign ministers of the 15-nation Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) forum were expected to issue a strong statement last night demanding a successful conclusion to the seven-year-old Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that would inject hundreds of billions of dollars into the world economy.

They were expected explicitly to endorse last year's Blair House agreement between America and the EC on farm subsidies which the French are resisting, and some Asian members were said to be considering further unilateral tariff cuts as an incentive.

The ministers, who have been meeting in advance of today's informal gathering of

their leaders, were also expected to announce the first tentative steps towards turning the fledgling, four-year-old Apec into a more formal regional trading alliance that would account for nearly half the world's economic output. That too was designed to send a



Evans: too early for a Pacific Community

strong warning to Europe to show flexibility on GATT or risk the world's division into rival trading blocs.

This is the first summit of Asian and North American leaders. Washington has said it regards Asia as the world's most important region.

"I think it will not be lost on European leaders that... the countries of the Asia Pacific are working together toward trade liberalisation," said Warren Christopher, the American secretary of state. "The message of this meeting is to send shivers down the spines of Europeans," said a Singapore delegate.

The ministers were expected to announce a framework for promoting trade and investment within Apec. However, American plans for turning Apec into a formal Pacific economic community are years away and have met

strong resistance this week from a number of Asian nations who fear US hegemony and the dismantling of barriers that protect their emerging industries. "This is an idea whose time has not come," admitted Gareth Evans, Australia's foreign minister.

Last night in Seattle, President Clinton was meeting Jiang Zemin, the Chinese president, in the highest-level Sino-American encounter since the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989.

Clinton outburst: In an ill-tempered outburst, Mr Clinton lashed out at the American press in an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine, held three weeks ago. Hitting back at the interviewer's suggestion that he backs down on big issues, he said: "I have fought more damn battles than any president in 20 years, with the possible exception of Reagan's first budget, and not gotten one damn bit of credit from the knee-jerk liberal press. And I am sick and tired of it, and you can put that in the damn article."

Clinton summit, page 1



Jiang Zemin, the Chinese president, receives a San Francisco Giants baseball cap before setting off for Seattle for the Apec conference on Pacific trade

Peking's leaders jostle Jiang

BY JONATHAN MIRSKY

JIANG Zemin wears many imposing hats: president, party general secretary, and head of the central military commission. He has also been designated, by Deng Xiaoping, as China's "core leader", a signal that the 59-year-old senior leader has anointed him as his heir.

That "crown" could, however, weigh heavy on Mr Jiang's head since much tougher men than him are readying themselves for the struggle to succeed Mr Deng.

Mr Jiang is said to be the son of a "revolutionary", a good start in a country where such factors count. But this is true as well of his main rival, Li Peng, the prime minister, with whom he also shares a technical university background in the Soviet Union.

When the succession battle begins, it is hard to think of a single political weapon that Mr Jiang will be able to wield, apart from reminding his rivals that, when Mr Deng was alive, the leader had found him inoffensive.

US unions vow revenge over Nafta 'betrayal'

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S trade union leaders swore revenge against President Clinton and Congress after the battle over the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta), approval of which left Democrats divided.

Union leaders gave the impression of having suffered one of the worst political defeats in the unions' history, far worse than anything that happened to them under the Reagan-Bush era. The sense of betrayal became most apparent in an angry outburst by William Bywater, head of the electronics workers and a man with the flair of an old-fashioned union boss, who screamed into a television microphone that "I guarantee in November (1994, when Congress is up for re-election), my union and many other unions that feel as I do, we're going to make sure we get even at the polls."

Lane Kirkland, leader of the AFL-CIO, America's union umbrella organisation, said the president and Congress had made special deals with citrus, peanuts, sugar and wheat growers, but "there was not one word about the rights of workers on both sides of the border to obtain decent wages and safe working conditions, or to defend themselves from gross exploitation".

That about sums up union reaction, in content and tone, and reflects a view now commonplace among trade unionists that the Nafta battle was an old-fashioned class war between the Washington political establishment from either party, against ordinary working people.

The internal divisions within the party are accompanied by a division among party leaders over whether to begin a genuine healing process, or only pretend to do so. The president's popularity is thriving in the midst of his party's internal battles, precisely

because it underlines his campaign promise to be a "New Democrat". The unions fear, probably rightly, that the "New Democratic" party is one where they would play only a much smaller role, if any role at all. Mr Clinton's alienation from the trade union movement could turn into an electoral asset for himself, but to a much lesser extent for congressmen in the Midwestern rustbelt, who rely on the trade union for much of their re-election campaign funding.

The official line taken by senior Democrats is that the party will now rally together



Kirkland: fearful for rights of workers

to defend Mr Clinton's health care reform programme, his next big battle, against Republican opposition. The White House said that Mr Clinton has already begun a charm offensive by telephone to placate angry union leaders. The administration will also give priority to a number of policies designed to please the unions, among them a rise in the minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$4.75.

But one union boss, Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters, the truck drivers union, said that his union might reconsider their support for the health plan.

Mr Biggs rattles the market for China

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

THE American investment manager whose bullish comments on the economic prospects for China sent the Hong Kong stock market soaring has changed his tune, and the market has fallen sharply.

It was Barton Biggs whose single sentence in September — "After eight days in China, I'm tuned in, overfed, and maximum bullish on China" — set off a seven-week, 25 per cent stock-market skyrocket.

Now he is not so sure, causing the index to fall 341 points on Thursday and a further 71 points yesterday. He admitted: "It is not so clear who the winners and losers will be in the struggle for economic policy in China."

Even Mao Tse-tung would have envied the power of Mr Biggs, senior analyst at Morgan Stanley, to shake a leading economy with an aphorism or two, like "some time in the next few years, China will have the mother of all bull markets".

Yesterday angry investors

Kong's market regulatory officials to demand that they "do something". Little can be done, when Mr Biggs speaks, investors buy.

In September Mr Biggs wrote to his investors: He had seen many bull markets, "but the China story is the best and the brightest". Chinese leaders — "smart, tough, friendly people with a definite vision" — impressed him. "The Chinese politicians we met all looked terrific. Lean, vigorous, worked the crowds."

Mr Biggs attacked the "sanctimonious" attitude of the Western press towards Chinese corruption and repression. During his eight-day trip, he said: "I did not sense pervasive corruption or decadence in China as I have done in other developing countries."

Now the "mother of bull markets" is less attractive. This week Mr Biggs said: "Taking a third of our chips off the table while the game is still wild and woolly seems

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Protest week gives Balladur notice of stormy winter

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS

PROTESTS by thousands of public sector workers and students in Paris and the provinces this week have warned the French government it risks widespread unrest if it moves too quickly to trim losses and privatise big state-owned companies.

Although there was little disorder, the demonstrations on Thursday sharpened concern within the administration of Edouard Balladur that despair over unemployment is boiling beneath a relatively placid surface as France enters another winter of recession with little sign of recovery.

Talk of a "new May 1968" has filled the media this week with commentators making much of allegedly obsessive anxiety by M. Balladur over the chances of an upheaval of the kind he experienced 25 years ago when he was a senior aide to his prime ministerial predecessor, Georges Pompidou. For some politicians, a better comparison is with 1986 when strikes, student protests and a wave of terrorism severely tarnished the last Gaullist government to share power with President Mitterrand.

Evidence of a grim mood emerged in a poll yesterday which showed that 72 per cent believe the country faces a "serious risk of social explosion". Fifty-six per cent said they were ready to take part in or support mass protests, including a general strike. Apart from Air France, there have been relatively few strikes in recent months and, with the Socialist party still paralysed after its electoral defeat, there is no political force rallying opposition.

The bitter public mood, generated by the rise in unemployment to 11.7 per cent with no improvement on the horizon, is causing M. Balladur and his team to exercise extreme caution. They are leaping to defuse industrial unrest, as they did in the Air France strike last month, rather than risk a flare-up. As well as surrendering to the airline workers, the government has

With the deadline for a new world trade agreement on December 15, the next four weeks are crucial to the survival of the Gaullist-led government in France

this week backtracked on a scheme to reduce working hours and given a 1.5 billion franc (£172 million) hand-out to the farmers.

Foreign experts view M. Balladur's policy of "bomb-defusing", as one magazine called it, as a short-term remedy, likely to encourage unrealistic demands, hamper his effort to modernise the economy, and deepen a looming recession. M. Balladur is aware, however, that with the deadline for a new world trade accord on December 15, the next four weeks are crucial to his government's survival.

At the heart of his test lies the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which has exploded in recent months into a symbol of French prestige and identity. With GATT demonised in the public mind as an American plot to undermine France, M. Balladur has almost no room for manoeuvre. France needs to sign the free trade pact as

badly as any of its partners, and risks great political and economic damage if it blocks a deal. At the same time, M. Balladur must obtain concessions from the Americans on farm trade and cultural goods in order to be able to depict a French signature as anything other than defeat. The aid package to the farmers was a sop to dampen discontent over a GATT compromise. But if GATT collapses in fiasco, M. Balladur's authority could collapse as critical forces within his party clamour for a switch to a more nationalist economic policy.

M. Balladur is helped, however, by continuing personal popularity. After dipping in the aftermath of the Air France affair, his ratings have risen again this week. The "Teflon" qualities of the aristocratic prime minister with the reassuring demeanour are the biggest phenomenon of politics in France. If he navigates the GATT shoals with his popularity intact, he will become the easy favourite to succeed M. Mitterrand in 1995.

Yesterday, France's two houses of parliament approved an amendment to the constitution to limit political asylum before border controls among nine European Community countries are abolished next year. The amendment drafted by M. Mitterrand and M. Balladur allows Paris to refuse to examine a request for asylum turned down by another EC country.

The two houses met in a rare joint session in Louis XIV's 17th-century palace of Versailles. The government sought the amendment to head off a flood of asylum-seekers rejected by other states when the Schengen open border accord comes into force on February 1 in France, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece.



Balladur addressing parliament yesterday



Alessandra Mussolini, the neo-Fascist grand-daughter of the wartime dictator, campaigning yesterday in Naples, where polls make her the runner-up in the race for mayor in Sunday's round of local elections

Guns shield anti-Mafia crusader

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN PALERMO

SECURITY around Leoluca Orlando, the head of Italy's anti-Mafia party, was tightened yesterday as opinion polls gave him a commanding lead ahead of Sunday's election of Palermo's mayor.

"Certainly the mafiosi and their politician friends are beginning to be frightened," Signor Orlando, 46, the founder of the Rete (Network) Party said at his heavily guarded flat in the Sicilian capital. "They might strike any day to destroy my projects."

Polls predict Signor Orlando could win as much as 52 per cent of the vote compared with 28 per cent for his main rival, Elda Pucci, the former Christian Democratic mayor. Similar contests are being

held in a constellation of Italian cities on Sunday, including Rome, Naples, Venice and Genoa. Only in Palermo, however, is any candidate credited with a chance of winning outright.

Signor Orlando, nicknamed the "walking corpse" because he heads the Cosa Nostra hit list, believes his election on a programme of open government will lead to a swing in favour of his party in a general election expected next spring. He sees the Palace of Eagles town hall as a springboard for his ambition to become prime minister, arguing that only he can prevent Umberto Bossi, the devolutionist Lombardy League leader, from heading a future government.

One of his teenage daughters answers a knock on the front door. "Papa, your escort is waiting." His wife, Milly, insists he drink another coffee. Outside a Carabinieri guard draws a Beretta pistol and stops traffic to prepare for Signor Orlando's departure on the last day of the campaign. Plainclothes bodyguards pile into his steel-plated Fiat and two escort cars. Other Carabinieri with sub-machineguns cover from bushes in an armoured van.

At a street market, Signor Orlando wanders through the stalls, kissing friends, signing autographs and distributing leaflets about his battle against the mob. The candidate is greeted warmly at a pizzeria by 40 middle-class businessmen and their families. "Palermo is going to be a normal city again," he tells them.

"After he comes first on Sunday the risk of an attempt on his life will increase threefold," an Orlando aide said. "The Mafia has never liked what he says, but they will hate it when he takes away their supply of money by ending municipal building contracts for mobsters."

□ Rome: The alleged head of Cosa Nostra, Salvatore "Totò" Riina, and the Mafia supergrass, Tommaso Buscetta, came face to face in court yesterday. But the jailed godfather refused to speak to his accuser because he objected to the fact he had had several wives and mistresses.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hostages freed by Kurds

Ankara: Kurdish rebels have released their last Western hostages, an American and a New Zealander kidnapped last month in eastern Turkey, diplomats said yesterday. Colin Patrick Stanger and a New Zealander, identified by his captors as Dougal Wentworth Howard Ellis, were freed overnight near Pulmur.

The men, who had been seized at a roadblock set up by the Kurdistan Workers' Party, were unharmed. (Reuters)

Red Cross sued

Brussels: Nine haemophiliacs in Belgium are suing the Red Cross after contracting the virus that can lead to Aids from blood transfusions. The suits say that the blood should have been checked. (Reuters)

Woman hanged

Amman: Jordan carried out the second execution of a woman in its history, hanging a housewife, 26, who bludgeoned her husband to death with a brick as he watched TV, then burnt his body. (Reuters)

Inspectors call

Baghdad: United Nations inspectors arrived here to investigate reports of chemical attacks on marsh Arabs and were met with bitter criticism of their mission by the Iraqi government. (AFP)

Berlin bombs

Berlin: Left-wing radicals opposed to the transformation of the rundown Kreuzberg district into a playground for the wealthy planted bombs which damaged two houses and two cars. (Reuters)

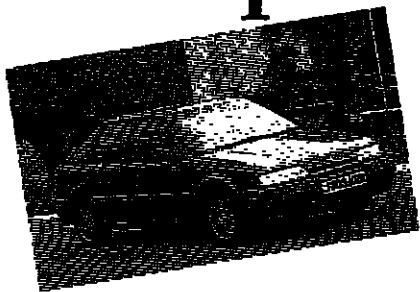
Nature lovers

Pia: Pornographic film-makers have outraged residents of this village in southwest France by filming outdoor sex acts on roofs and car bonnets. One woman claims her geese have been disturbed. (AFP)

Down under

Adelaide: Eagle-eyed customs officers swooped on a breeder who tried to smuggle Thai parrots into Australia by stuffing them into his underpants. He was fined nearly £10,000. (AP)

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Nigerians clash with police in defiance of coup

By Our Foreign Staff

■ Opposition to the military takeover is being voiced inside and outside Nigeria. The country's new strongman has declared, however, that he will brook no dissent

POLICE in Nigeria clashed with pro-democracy protesters who took to the streets in three cities yesterday to condemn the return of military rule after General Sani Abacha, the new leader, scrapped all democratic structures.

The demonstrators, defying the general, rioted in Akure, Abeokuta and Ilorin in south-western Nigeria, said Biko Ransome-Kuti, the head of the Campaign for Democracy (CD) movement. At least 30 people were held in Abeokuta, where a police officer said that teargas was fired and many demonstrators were arrested.

Although some of yesterday's protests were part of a continuing campaign against last week's rise in the price of petrol and the annulment of the June presidential elections, the democracy campaign has gained a fresh sense of purpose following General Abacha's coup, which has put the country's seven-year march towards civilian rule back to the beginning.

In London, Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, condemned the takeover and rejected the new regime's appeal to the world community to suspend judgment. "I do not think that is reasonable," he told MPs in the Commons debate on the Queen's Speech. "We have already shown considerable patience towards Nigeria over the past ten years."

Mr Hurd said military rule could not be a viable solution in Nigeria and urged General Abacha to restore rapidly a democratic, civilian government. "We are consulting our international partners on further steps which may need to be taken in response to this backward step," he added. Nigeria has been ruled by the military for 23 of its 33 years of independence from Britain.

In Lagos, the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), a human rights pressure group, called on Nigerians "to reject, and demonstrate their rejection, of a power-corrupted military bent on turning free citizens to

slaves in their own country". General Abacha dissolved political parties along with all elected local councils, state governments and the federal legislature on Thursday, scuttling the phased programme to return the West African state to full democracy.

General Abacha, who took over from Ernest Shonekan, the military-appointed civilian interim president, said a conference would be convened to work out a future constitutional structure for Nigeria and to suggest ways of forming new

Lusaka: Talks here to end Angola's civil war were back on track yesterday after government negotiators dropped their demand that civilian supporters of the Unita rebel movement be disarmed. A session was scrapped after Unita objected to the demand and the resumption of talks yesterday followed urgent meetings between a United Nations special envoy, Angolan government negotiators and observers from America, Russia and Portugal. Angola's former colonial ruler. (Reuters)

political parties. The CLO statement said his move in effect put the country back ten years to December 31, 1983, when the last civilian government was toppled in a military coup. "The CLO is unable to see how the military's unprincipled takeover of the sovereignty of the Nigerian people can restore democracy and national self-confidence," it added. Dr Ransome-Kuti described the change in leadership as a coup. "Instead of gracefully bowing out, they have put us back into full-fledged military rule," he said.

Most people in Lagos, Nigeria's biggest city, stayed at home yesterday. Banks, main shops and factories remained shut after General Abacha declared in a broadcast lasting barely ten minutes that he would brook no trouble from any quarter. Traffic remained light with few buses on the roads.

"Tragedy," roared the Lagos newspaper *Tell* in a huge front-page headline. "Abacha sweeps off democracy."

There has so far been no reaction from Chief Moshood Abiola, the Muslim tycoon widely regarded as the winner of the June presidential election, which was cancelled by General Babangida, the previous military leader. General Babangida installed the civilian administration led by Mr Shonekan in August.

Chief Abiola's reaction is crucial to what happens in southwest Nigeria, his home region and centre of riots and protests since the election was scrapped. His aides were optimistic after the removal of Mr Shonekan, but they were visibly glum after General Abacha's speech to the nation. The chief went into seclusion and would not come out of his sprawling compound in Lagos. However, Victor Adomolekun, an aide, said: "It's bad, very bad."

One media report claimed that the junta would propose a presidency system in which the post of head of state would be rotated among six regional tribal strongholds in the ethnically polarised nation. The election of Chief Abiola, a Muslim member of the predominantly Christian Yoruba tribe from the southwest, was opposed by the mainly Muslim Hausa-Fulani in the north, who dominate politics and the military.



Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress president, campaigning in Durban yesterday for South Africa's first all-race elections

Pretoria casts business net across Africa

By SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

AS South Africa's return to the international stage has accelerated with the lifting of sanctions and the signing of a non-racial constitution, many South Africans have started to explore the continent north of the Limpopo. The rest of Africa is eager to encourage South Africans, especially businessmen, hoping they will bring capital and management knowhow.

Pretoria envisages a Southern African community of trading nations, centred on Johannesburg, as well as export growth through Kenya, Nigeria and Egypt. The most ambitious manifestation of this policy so far is the plan of Eskom, the state-run electrical power giant, for a Southern and Central African grid. Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe are already linked to South Africa by electricity cables. Eskom plans, by exploiting the hydroelectric power potential of the region's great rivers, notably the Zambezi and Congo, to include Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Angola.

Even in the politically sensitive media industry, African governments have welcomed South African businesses. M-Net, the South African pay TV network, is already involved in Kenya and Uganda and plans to expand through the continent. But it has not all been

plain sailing. R.F. "Pik" Botha, the South African foreign minister, and his aides were recently fleeced of £320,000 when they tried to set up a magazine favourable to South Africa's interests in Nigeria. They paid their deposit into a London bank account — and in a classic Lagos fiddle, the money vanished.

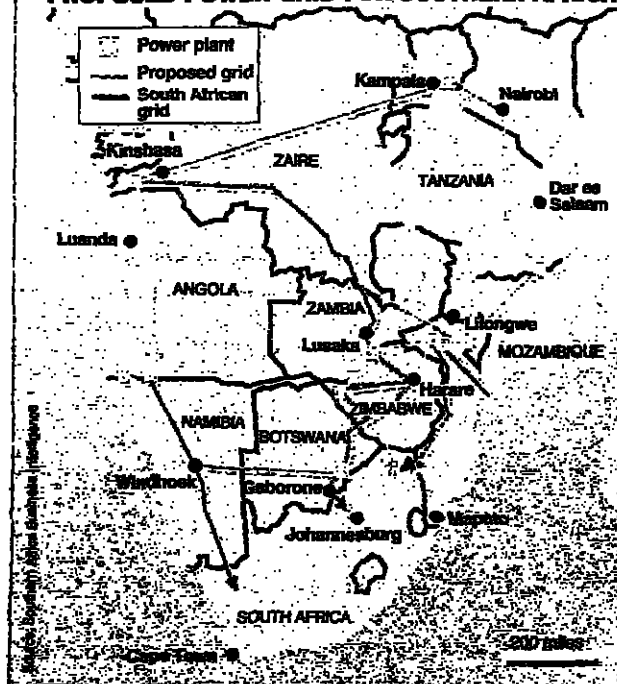
But trade with Kenya has boomed. Last year South African exports to Kenya went up by 363 per cent on the previous year to £30.2 million.

Details of any regional or bilateral trade agreements between South Africa and its neighbours depend on the outcome of the Gatt talks later this month, and on whether Pretoria will be prepared to lift import tariffs and expose domestic producers to competition.

A trade pact with Zimbabwe has been held up under pressure from South African businessmen and Zimbabwe's textile producers have been badly hit by new import duties to South Africa. A further hindrance to South African investors is the restriction on the amount of money they can take out of the country. But ways have been found around this, for example by converting their rand in Mozambique to US dollars.

Leading article, page 19

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Peaks of glistening charm

A dozen resorts on the French-Swiss border are a magnet to skiers



Skiers can glide across borders with no customs control

The first rays of the morning sunlight touch the peaks above the Swiss resort of Les Crosets before illuminating the pretty Illiez valley below. From this phenomenon Les Portes du Soleil was born, giving an appropriate collective name to a dozen ski resorts that straddle the French and Swiss borders uniting the Haute Savoie and Swiss Valais. Avoiaz, Champéry, Châtel and Morzine are the centres of this vast expanse of skiing.

Morzine is an old style chalet resort set in charming wooded surroundings. A river runs through the middle of the market town, spanned by a high footbridge and the shopping street climbs from the old village centre to the ski slopes.

Although the skiing extends up to 2,000 metres, Morzine itself is a modest kilometre high which means that resort level snow is scarce. The town makes up with a plentiful supply of restaurants, tea-rooms and bars and more life

of its own than many other ski resorts.

The skiing will best suit intermediates who enjoy getting miles of piste under their feet without having to ski the same runs twice. There are no border controls and although Morzine is on the French side of the divide you can ski into and out of Switzerland without passports. Customs controls do, however, exist, and duty-free bought on the other side of the border has to be declared, although smuggling in these regions is a centuries-old profession.

Like Les Portes du Soleil, the holidays featured in *The Times* offer today bring together a group of skiing centres from which scores of different runs are accessible.

Lauterbrunnen, in the Bernese Oberland of Switzerland, provides skiers with a choice

of taking the funicular railway up to the ancient and majestic resort of Wengen, with its celebrated Lauberhorn peak, or catching the cable car to Mürren with skiing up to nearly 3,000 metres on the Schilthorn.

British skiers have been coming to these two resorts for the last century and Wengen is the home of the Downhill Only Club which has produced many professional racers. A lift pass covering both resorts can be bought and although skiers face the disadvantage of a journey up to the slopes each morning, Lauterbrunnen provides an ideal location from which to choose where you will ski each day. A third resort, Grindelwald, is just an hour's drive down the valley.

Kirchberg is a busy spa village three miles down the road from Kitzbühel which was recently nominated by an Austrian newspaper as the country's best ski resort. Kitzbühel is a marvellous walled medieval town that attracts the rich and famous but can consequently be very pricey. Kirchberg is linked into the ski area but has a younger, more vibrant atmosphere. New snow making machines have been installed to improve the area's reliability for skiing and its slopes are well suited to both beginners and experts.

Hopfgarten is a delightful, small village in the middle of a collection of resorts which the British have made their own. With its steep cobbled streets and compact centre, the resort has an ancient feel to it. Underlining the British interests in the region, the Old English pub is one of the most popular drinking haunts. The area is linked into one ski circuit known as the Ski-World ranging from 622 metres at Hopfgarten to 1,829 metres at Westendorf.

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MORZINE, France. Morzine is a traditional Savoyard town which has retained its French atmosphere and has masses of night life. The skiing is in the world-famous Portes du Soleil, spanning France and Switzerland, with 620 kms of marked pistes of all standards. You stay at Club le Sherpa, a charming chalet style hotel with private facilities. Halfboard and a cooked breakfast, afternoon tea and a 3-course dinner with wine and coffee is included. Flights Gatwick-Genève and coach transfers included.

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KIRCHBERG, Austria. A typically beautiful Tyrolean village 6kms from Kitzbühel. The excellent skiing is part of the great Kitzbühel Circuit. You stay at Skizubler Circus, a wonderfully converted 16th century chalet which is suited to the young and lively skier. Rooms are on a multi-share basis and have shared facilities. Price includes cooked breakfast and dinner on 6 nights, flights from Gatwick to Salzburg and coach transfers.

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HOPFGARTEN, Austria. Situated in the beautiful North Tyrol, in Ski Welt, the largest ski area in Austria. You stay at Haus Helmut, a friendly club style hotel. Accommodation is on a multi-share basis and rooms have shared facilities. Price includes a breakfast and 3-course dinner on

6 nights, flights from Gatwick to Salzburg and coach transfers.

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تکذا من الأصل

Foreigners flee from death threat in Algeria

By Christopher Walker, Middle East Correspondent

THOUSANDS of foreigners are fleeing Algeria in advance of the November 30 deadline set by Islamic militants threatening assassination for any who remain.

Anxiety among the large expatriate community increased after death sentences were passed on 47 fundamentalists, bringing to more than 360 the Muslim militants given capital sentences since the state of emergency was imposed 18 months ago. Of those, 26 have been executed.

Although no official figures on the size of the exodus are available, more than one-third of the 121 pupils of 28 nationalities at just one small French school at Hydra, on the heights of Algiers, were absent on the second day of the new half-term. About three-quarters of the French pupils had not returned.

Algerian officials are afraid that, if the ultimatum is implemented, it could cripple earnings from new gas and oil discoveries, vital for paying off the country's \$27 billion (£18 billion) foreign debt, by scaring away essential personnel.

The dilemma facing international companies and embassies not anxious to be seen

kidnapping and it will be more violent than in Egypt."

The foreign population before the recent exodus began was about 100,000, of whom 76,000 were French, half the latter spouses of Algerian citizens. Because of the variety of their occupations and places of residence, providing adequate security will be a daunting task.

In an effort to raise morale among the remaining foreigners, the security forces sealed off the Algiers suburb of Belcourt, a noted extremist stronghold, and arrested about 200 suspects.

During October, seven foreigners were assassinated, including two senior Russian military advisers. A German family was held at gunpoint in Algiers and later spared on condition they passed on the message to all foreigners to leave or face attack.

Between 300 and 400 British nationals live in Algeria, with about half married to Algerians. The British embassy in Algiers said: "We are advising staff and the community to take sensible precautions. We are very concerned about the situation." Last month, just before the latest crisis erupted, Tim Eggar, the energy minister, visited Algiers with a business delegation and a British Gas executive announced that the company was looking for new business in the country.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was outlawed in March last year after a general election, which it was certain of winning, was aborted and a five-man presidency, including President Kafi, the head of state, installed with military backing. It has said that it will stand down later this year, but attempts to stage a "national dialogue" on the future with groups excluding the FIS have produced no results.

It was announced from Algiers that because of the continuing violence plans to hold a referendum on the presidency's political programme had been cancelled.

As the bloodshed increases, some foreign observers have begun to despair of a peaceful solution being found by the present hardline policy to what is moving closer to all-out civil war.

"Had the Islamic movement been allowed to assume parliamentary power, would it have been any less repressive, or more competent, than the army?" The New York Times asked recently. "No one can know. But it is instructive to contrast Algeria's disastrous experience with that of Jordan, which has allowed elected Islamic militants to take their parliamentary seats."



President Kafi: has military backing

giving in to blackmail was exposed in a macabre cartoon in the Algerian daily *Le Matin* which showed an armed fundamentalist trader offering a choice — a suitcase or a coffin.

Many Westerners who remain are being moved into hotels or more secure accommodation.

The ultimatum was delivered in a hand-written note carried by Michelle Thevenot, one of the three French nationals released after being kidnapped in central Algiers on October 24. The note told all other foreigners: "Leave the country. We are giving you one month. Anyone who exceeds that period will be responsible for his own sudden death. There will be no



An Israeli border guard checking a Palestinian youth on his way to Friday prayers in Jerusalem. The military stepped up security across the occupied territories yesterday

Berlin trial sheds light on Iran killer squads

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

A COMPREHENSIVE account of Iran's secret police activities in Europe is emerging from a trial of the men accused of shooting four Kurdish exile leaders in a Berlin restaurant.

The prosecutor is trying to prove that the five alleged assassins were directed by the Iranian secret police, Vevak. The men murdered in the Mykonos restaurant in September 1992 were all prominent members of the Kurdish opposition in Iran. The case could prove to be embarrassing for Tehran.

One plausible explanation for a recent controversial meeting between Iran's police minister, Ali Fallahiyan, and Helmut Kohl's top aide for intelligence affairs, Bernd Schmidbauer, is that the Iranian tried to have the trial postponed in return for concessions on Germans held in Iraq. The trial, however, is going ahead in Berlin and Dr Schmidbauer is expected to be a witness.

Iran intelligence-gathering is concentrated on three services, according to the Ger-

man prosecutor's documentation. The main foreign spy network is Vevak — the ministry for intelligence and security — and it is supplemented by the military intelligence unit, J2, which secures know-how and goods for Tehran's armed forces and nuclear programme. The third wing is the Revolutionary Guard, which deals with counter-intelligence, personal protection of politicians and repression of dissidents.

These three services overlap. The alleged leader of the killer squad in Berlin is said to be a senior employee of Vevak but was once a Revolutionary Guard. While living in Germany he was posing as a fruit and vegetable dealer. The Revolutionary Guard helps to identify targets for Vevak.

German counter-intelligence believes there are representatives of all three Iranian branches working in the Iranian embassy in Bonn and consulates in Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich.

The fear that these activities might be unearthed at the trial seems to have prompted a rethink in Tehran, with the emphasis shifting from Vevak to Hezbollah, the Party of God, as the main perpetrator of assassination and "dirty tricks" in Europe.

The Berlin trial thus aims not only to prove that the vegetable dealer, Kazem Darabi, and his four accomplices were killers but that they also acted on orders. It is strange, therefore, that Bonn has such active links with Vevak. After meeting Dr Schmidbauer, the Iranian police minister was last month given red-carpet treatment at the BND intelligence HQ near Munich. German computers have been supplied to Vevak and agents have been trained by German officers.

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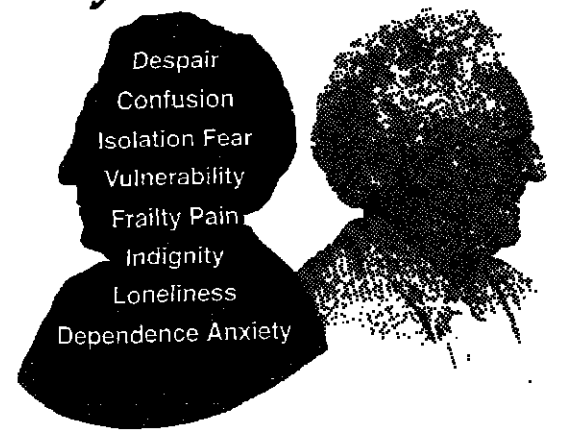
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'Bishop Clinton' has joined the Rev Jesse Jackson in urging blacks to assume responsibility for the carnage on their streets

A few days before he routed the trade protectionists on Capitol Hill, Bill Clinton made a speech in which he said, in effect, that neither the North American Free Trade Agreement nor any of the other great reforms he hoped to bring to the American people, would count for so much as a row of beans unless young people — especially young black people — could be persuaded to stop killing each other. He described the violence among the young as a "great crisis of the spirit" that is gripping America today, and said: "I tell you, unless we do something about crime and drugs and violence that is ravaging our country, it will destroy us."

The president was speaking from the pulpit of the church in Memphis, Tennessee, where Martin Luther King preached for the last time before he was murdered in that city 25 years ago. He was introduced to the congregation as "Bishop Clinton" — a description which later seemed almost appropriate in view of his apocalyptic tone and repeated invocations of the grace of God. It was a startling speech, startling both for its uncharacteristic passion and for its unequivocal depiction of the wave of violence as a plague particular to blacks.

Imagining Dr King resurrected at his side, assessing the civil rights achievements of the past quarter-century, Mr Clinton pictured himself saying: "I fought to stop white people from being so filled with hate that they would wreak violence on black people. I did not fight for the right of black people to murder other black people with reckless abandon." In this year of commemorations recalling the early civil rights struggles — the 30th anniversary of President Kennedy's assassination is on

Alexander Chancellor in New York



Monday — Mr Clinton chose in this evocative place to focus solemnly on the degradation into which so much of America's black youth has now sunk, and to appeal to black community leaders, especially church leaders, to get to grips with the crisis, saying that the government alone could not solve it.

He would probably never have dared address the problem so directly if the Rev Jesse Jackson had not already blazed the trail. For months Mr Jackson has been travelling the country on a crusade he calls "the new frontier of the civil rights movement", urging blacks to assume responsibility for the carnage on their streets, rather than explaining it to themselves as a consequence of white oppression. Mr Jackson is a politician who inspired much scepticism, and his

new crusade has been portrayed here and there as a cynical attempt to recapture the limelight which he lost during the last presidential election. That may be partly true, but it is difficult to doubt Mr Jackson's sincerity when he says he cannot remember a time when so much of black America was in such deep danger and despair. Although blacks account for only just over 12 per cent of the population, almost half of the 21,500 murders committed in this country in 1991 were of black people, 90 per cent of whom were killed by other blacks, usually with

firearms. Juvenile arrests for weapons law violations increased by 62 per cent between 1987 and 1991, with black youths being arrested at three times the rate of whites. In addition to the murders, which in 1991 claimed more than six people a day under the age of 18, the Justice Department estimates that each year nearly one million teenagers are raped, robbed or assaulted, mainly by their peers. As they have told Mr Jackson at countless school meetings, many black children regard possession of a gun as essential for their self-defence, just as rednecks do in the South. At a school in Washington, one boy upbraided Mr Jackson for naivety about what it takes to survive in the streets. "I'm sorry, sir, this is 1993 not 1963," he said. "I don't know where you've been." Mr Jackson put his hand on the boy's shoulders and replied: "I've

been to a lot of teenage funerals." One can only guess at the effect all this has on black morale and self-esteem, but it is hardly conducive to optimism. Many black Americans still find comfort in their churches — a Gallup poll five years ago found that 75 per cent of all blacks agreed with the statement that "religion can answer all or most of today's problems" — but now even the churches are losing credibility with their members, following allegations that church leaders in New Jersey took bribes from the Republicans to keep blacks away from the polls during the recent gubernatorial election. One black Baptist pastor says parishioners now regularly call him to ask: "Reverend, how much money did you get?"

The situation is no less than heartbreaking. "Stop the violence!" Mr Jackson shouts. "Save the children!" Oh yes, but how?

Lawrence Freedman says Ulster's Unionists may have to take a risk

Reconciling the incompatible

Can Northern Ireland follow other intractable conflicts, such as those in South Africa and Israel, and see a decisive move towards peace? For both the ANC and the PLO, the renunciation of terrorism provided an entrée into negotiations on a new constitution: can the IRA follow this route? Can these other conflicts illuminate the problem of how to match "legitimate goals" with realistic aspirations?

Before becoming too taken up with analogies, it is important to stress the differences not only in the origins and character of these conflicts, but also between the advance of radical movements hitherto denied democratic expression and one able to participate in electoral politics. Other breakthroughs begin with the antagonists, here the running is being made, so far, by Dublin and London.

Another difference is the success of the British government in preventing the Northern Ireland conflict from becoming internationalised. It is not a regular subject of UN Security Council resolutions, nor the despatch of sundry elder statesmen on mediation missions. London puts much effort into persuading others (in particular American legislators) not to dabble in peace-making, while urging them to deny aid and comfort to the IRA. Keeping the problem defined as one of internal security depends on containing the violence.

That the violence has not spun out of control does not make it less dreadful for those caught up in it. Nor does it mean that the paramilitaries have been defeated. They retain a formidable capacity to inflict murder and mayhem. Yet containment does limit the impact of violence as an instrument of political change. For the IRA to succeed, its military campaign needs to appear irresistible, and it is many years since it appeared close to sustaining the necessary levels of activity. Unlike the ANC or the PLO, it has been reluctant to use non-violent forms of mass action, such as strikes, which implies doubts about the level of its support.

The Protestant paramilitaries have far less radical political objectives, so their task is easier. There is a crude logic behind their vicious tactics: by murdering Catholics, they seek to make the IRA's natural constituency suffer for its actions. The relative ease with which sectarian murders can be committed is a major challenge to the security forces, for they must not only prevent a spiral of violence but also demonstrate that all sections of the community can be protected.

The fact that the violence can only be contained, rather than suppressed, means that the search for a new political concordat must be conducted against the background of an inconclusive armed struggle.

As we see in Bosnia, such trials of strength produce much human and material devastation, but rarely a just settlement or even an honourable draw. Yet they do at least provide brutal clarification of the local balance of power. Sufficient is known about this balance in South Africa for Mandela soon to be president, and in the Occupied Territories for Arafat to accept only a modest territorial compromise. In Northern Ireland there remains a crucial uncertainty in assessments of relative power: the IRA regularly takes the military initiative, although it is widely supposed that in a full-blooded civil war the Loyalist paramilitaries would "win".

This uncertainty affects the search for a constitutional settlement. The more Dublin is involved, the stronger the Catholics are; the more local administration is devolved to Belfast, the stronger the Protestants are. If both sides are to be denied notional victories, then London must continue to be pre-eminent through direct rule.

The only serious compromise solution has been for London to offer a degree of devolution on condition that the Protestant majority effectively shares power with the Catholic minority and so avoids the tendency for elections to become crude trials of demographic strength. The opposition sparked by experiments in power-sharing in the 1970s and by the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement demonstrates the problems involved in persuading the Unionists to accept any qualification of their local advantages.

This may be possible only when unification of the two Irelands is crossed off the political agenda. Hence the importance of amending the Republic's constitutional claim to the territory of the North, although this now seems possible only with a promise that if conditions change, unification may again be considered.

Can Gerry Adams contribute here? He has gained political legitimacy (at the expense of John Hume), but there is distaste at the idea that he can gain a hearing by turning the violence on and off, as well as asserting that he might not actually be able to do this anyway. As Yasser Arafat is now finding, a leader who goes too far out on a limb, especially towards accommodation with the old enemy, can soon find himself in a struggle to maintain his powerbase in the face of militants' anger. It is also worth remembering that the breakthroughs in South Africa and Israel have depended upon the taking of risks by those who apparently had the greatest stake in the status quo.

The key to peace in Northern Ireland may not be so much a nationalist Mandela or Arafat, but a Unionist de Klerk or Rabin.

The author is professor of war studies at King's College, London.

Art house in a cul-de-sac

The judges of the Turner prize have ceased to appreciate the craft of creation

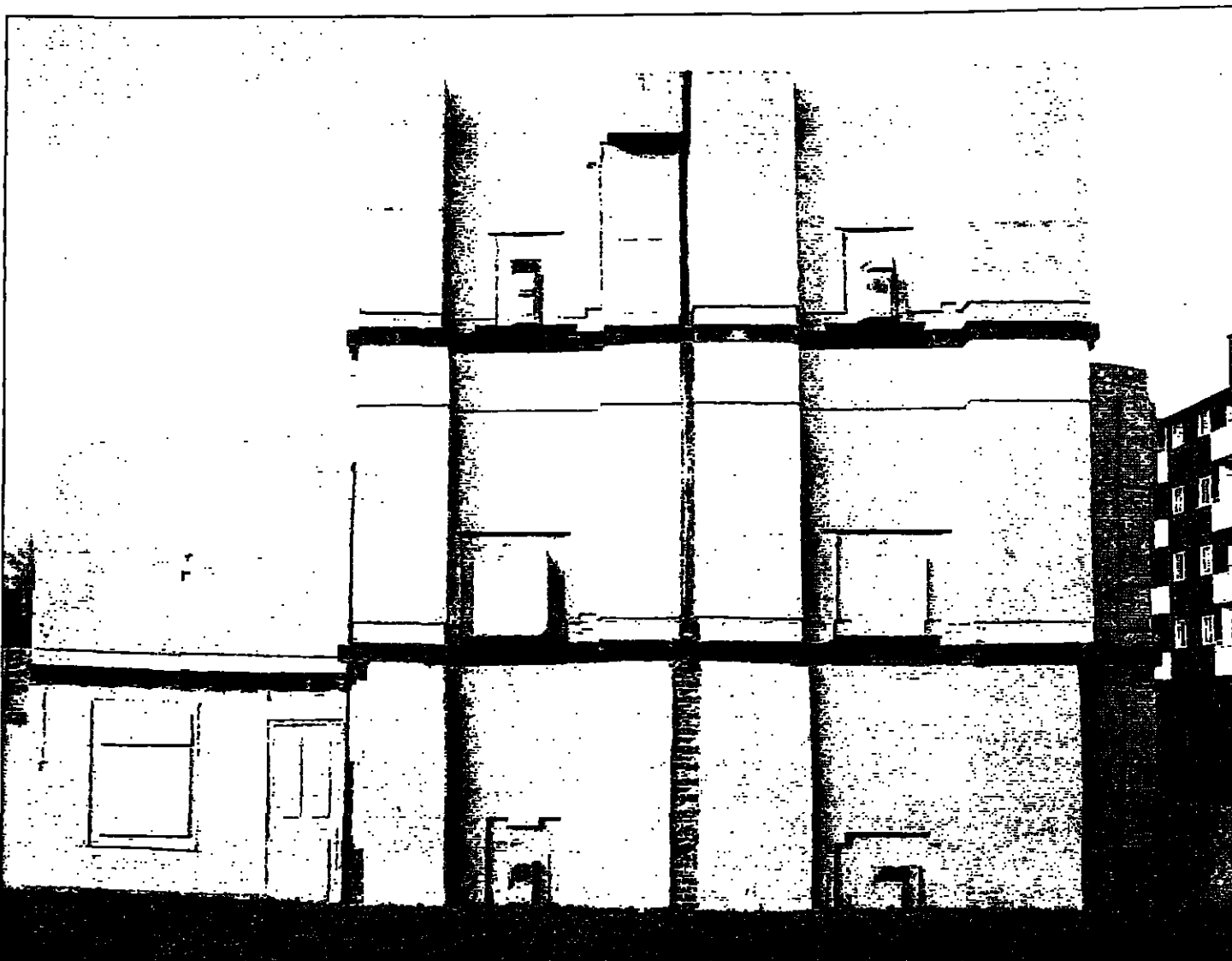
To see it for yourself, cried the *Financial Times*. "Go to the junction of Grove Road and Roman Road in E3", where stands "one of the only successful pieces of contemporary monumental sculpture" in London. Who could resist the call (even if the sculpture is really in E3)? For this is November and Turner prize time. The winner is to be announced next Tuesday and work by the four shortlisted candidates is on show at the Tate.

Each year I go, I see, I learn to be conquered. Here allegedly is the cream of new British art, chosen under the aegis of the Tate's austere modernist director, Nicholas Serota. The prize entries, he declares, offer "new insights into the society and culture in which we live and share". Booker's novels, Swift's plays, Bata's films make no such grandiose claims. Why, I wonder, does art have to talk so big? Can it not speak for itself? But even the loudest mouth deserves a hearing. So each year I make the effort, I try.

I fail. I feel a numbing sensation that what is on trial is me, not art. This year's shortlist comprises Sean Scully's abstract paintings, Hannah Collins's photographs, Vong Phaophanit's strips of neon light covered in rice, and Rachel Whiteread's structures, including the one in E3. Of these, only Scully is a painter, albeit of coloured stripes. Collins is a photographer. Phaophanit and Whiteread are young people who have hit on simple ideas — putting neon in odd places and spraying concrete inside rooms — and executed them with some panache.

If there is talent, let alone genius, in all this then it must lie in the conception rather than the execution. The skills prized by the Turner judges are neither painterly nor plastic. The judges themselves are called art "professionals". Their chairman, Mr Serota himself, is clearly an opponent of the present revival of representational styles and subjects. While he is supported by a small group of critics, such as this paper's Richard Cork, others such as Giles Auyang of *The Spectator* are out for his blood, not least for demeaning the name of Turner. The row is longstanding, if rather anaemic.

But back to east London. Whiteread's house is certainly worth a visit before its demolition next month. It is a memorial to a Victorian terrace that was inexplicably destroyed to create a small, fenced park. Whiteread secured a stay of execution on one property, sprayed its interior with concrete and knocked away the surrounding roof and walls. She has previously done this with cupboards, baths



Rachel Whiteread's *House* used a Victorian terrace as a mould: "Whatever else this artistic blind alley may be, it is no longer new"

and a whole room, but this is her first house. The work is variously alleged to be "a statement about Thatcherism" and a "ghostly negative of reality".

We used to do such negatives at school. We called them not statements but moulds. This one is big and, illuminated at night, undeniably impressive. As requested, I pondered "the quiet, spiritual, poetic" qualities of the concrete as, in the FT's words, it "exposed in a way no one has ever quite done before the spaces which shape our lives". Putting all thought of Vermeer and Cézanne out of mind, I concentrated hard on the concrete shape. With the best will in the world, its message was facile and fleeting.

Whiteread's house is what most would term a folly, a brutalist version of the picturesque structures that Pope and Walpole erected in their Twickenham gardens. It must have taken her time and effort, but then so does a grotto. By all means let it stay where it is, a cenotaph not to Thatcherism, but to the destructiveness of municipal socialism. But clothing it in the jargon of art criticism does it no service. Nor are Phaophanit's piles of neon-lit rice elevated by the claim that they "typify the meeting of east and west". The same could be said of a Toyota crashing into a Ford.

We must tread softly here, because we tread on strange dreams. A new novel or play can be discussed in an agreed language.

Simon Jenkins

They use English grammar to bid me marvel at their art. I can go into the street and argue whether Booker has picked the right winner or compare a Pinter with a Stoppard. When a writer says his work reflects Conrad and Faulkner, I understand what he means. When Sean Scully invokes the same inspiration for his stripes, as he does, I am defeated. Did the Turner judges nod sagely and say to each other, "Ah yes, Conrad and Faulkner"? Phaophanit's mounds of rice require no more artistry than my doodling in a sugar bowl. How can putting them in the Tate render them "an extraordinarily satisfactory marriage, rich and complex in both material effects and possibilities of meanings"? The obscurantism suggests a collapse of critical faculty. No other art form abuses language this way.

I sense that the Turner judges have forgotten what it is they are rebelling against, what they are supposed to be hating. They have adopted Duchamp's silly phrase "I

do not believe in art, only artists", and assumed that it lets them off the hook of judgment. At the Tate, visitors giggle, embarrassed, in front of the works, like tourists accosted by a three-card trickster. They then cluster with relief round the video of the artists at work. The video is the art. A work has no meaning except when its creator, or a friendly critic, talks about it — and precious little then.

The Turner sponsor, Channel Four's Waldemar Januszczak, asks that we take the prize "properly and seriously". He complains that we have all "grown afraid of change". The implied challenge is reasonable. But the existence of a prize suggests judgment refined by competition. By sticking, year in year out, to the same conceptual coterie, the Turner judges protect their favourites from radical comparison. They also defeat their objective, which is supposedly to seek out the new. Whatever else this blind alley may be, it is no longer new.

Mr Serota presumably believes I have a brain lobe missing, that I suffer from a retarded aesthetic sensibility and cannot receive the subtle vibrations put out by his artists. I am Ruskin to his Whistler, gormless to his innovator. When Whistler offered up his sublime creations, I would have dismissed them as so much thrown paint. What can I say, except I think

not? I am a passionate Whistlerian: "Art should be independent of all claptrap, should stand alone and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear without confounding this with emotions entirely foreign to it." I acknowledge this philosophy in Mr Serota's brilliant rehanging of the British pictures at the Tate. The longer I stand before these works, the more I love them. Yet I stand before his Turner prizewinners and am bored and irritated. Welling within me is a conviction that while they may be sincere, they are massively banal. A mistake has been made. History will see the selectors not as neo-Whistlers but as neo-Dadaists, sponsoring a salon art that has lost all originality or charisma. They have simply walked away from the struggle.

Modernism should be hard. It should be taxing. I long for the Tate's new modern gallery to find a home and wish God-speed to its fundraisers. But something has gone terribly wrong with the Turner prize. An article in the Tate's own magazine discusses whether Turner in his own day would have won it, and concludes that he would have been pipped at the post by Lawrence. Neither would be on the Tate shortlist today: wrong style, wrong subject matter, wrong politics. George Eliot would win the Booker and Wordsworth would make Poet Laureate. But on Tuesday Britain's premier art prize will go to a folly.

Bexley or bust

AFTER Sir Edward Heath's cursory dismissal this week of the government's "back to basics" initiative, John Major must be wishing that he will — well, go away. No such luck.

Heath has made clear to his constituency officials that he has no plans to plump himself down with all the other former prime ministers — Thatcher, Home, Wilson and Callaghan — in the House of Lords during this parliament — or next. He wants to follow Churchill by staying in the Commons as long as health permits. Now 77, the oldest MP and father of the House, he could still be there at 86.

The voters of Old Bexley and Sidcup certainly seem to stick with him through all his anti-Thatcher and anti-Major rhetoric. Asked if her man really intends to fight the next election, his agent, Lorrie Eathorne, says: "As far as he has told us, he most certainly

is. He is in full possession of all his faculties and all his constituents want him. He is in excellent health. He is doing more than ever and he seems to be absolutely flourishing."

Maybe he just can't bear the thought of sharing the maroon benches with her ladyship.

Achilles' heel
THE DISASTER which befell the splendid 13th Earl Ferrers testifies to the perils lurking in the other place. "The House of Lords is a very dangerous place — for the government and inmates alike," he warns. For the deputy Lords' leader is hobbling around on crutches with his leg in plaster after pulling his Achilles' tendon.

"It actually came about by my doing nothing glamorous like playing tennis," he confides modestly. "I walked across the Prince's Chamber

and it just happened. I accused somebody of kicking me. "I then went up on the train to Nottingham and because I was a bit hobbled, slipped off the step and bust it."

As he can't stand on one foot for 20 minutes, he has pulled out of the debate on the Queen's Speech. The bill reforming the police in England and Wales, due to start in the Lords, may be handled by two Scots — confusingly, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, and the Home Office whip, Lord Mackay of Ardrbreckish.

Ferrers had expected to see through the shake-up of Welsh local councils. If, as is now likely, it is handed to Scotland's chief law officer, Lord Rodgers, the Tories will never again be able to rail against John Smith's Scottish mafia.

● Gillian Shepherd's *Euro-scepticism intensifies daily as she grapples with EC officials over the "set aside" scheme which pays farmers not to grow things. She publicly as-*



DIARY

ignates them today for making her miss Wednesday's cabinet meeting to no purpose. Having been persuaded to stay in Brussels on Tuesday night by the promise of progress, she complains on Channel 4's *A Week in Politics* that she found "scant work" had been done by officials overnight. "The meeting ended in a riot of indecision."

Give me a bell
MAYHEM at Broadcasting House, where the BBC had a new telephone network installed. Journalists and administrators complain that far from easing communication, their all-singing-all-dancing

phones have caused nothing but chaos. At one point, *World at One*, the daily current affairs programme, is said to have been reduced to mobile phones. Ericsson, the telecommunications company involved, has already apologised by sending a circular to BBC staff. "On behalf of Ericsson," it reads, "I would hereby like to bring forward our apologies for the disturbances which you have in your telecommunications network. The disturbances are not caused by the telephone system itself but by Ericsson project management. Ericsson Sweden is now taking charge..." Reassuring stuff.

Frame-up

HOWLS of protest over the "Images of Women in Art" exhibition at Northampton's Central Museum and Art Gallery. Letters have been sent to the borough council decrying its feminist slant. The exhibition, which has captions by the gallery's keeper of art, Alison Cowling, takes some old masters to task for portraying women as possessions, victims or Madonnas. Antonio Molinari's *The Ab-*



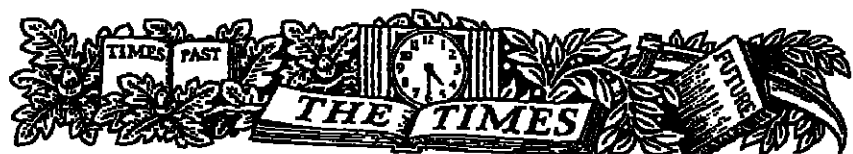
duction of Helen (1700) is criticised for its depiction of her rape. "A photograph showing a similar scene would be today condemned as pornographic," a caption reads.

John Collier's *Sacred & Profane Love* is also criticised for continuing the "sermon in oil" tradition which castigated adulterous women but not men. "It's complete nonsense to drag this work out of context," thunders one visitor. "How can you say Molinari is pornographic, he doesn't deprave." But Cowling is unbending, and Labour council leader John Dickie is backing her. "I don't believe these people are real. This is a silly and trivial criticism. We have a very exciting exhibition. I think all art should be thought-provoking. I suppose they would rather we put on a number of chocolate-box tops."

Going for a song
ELTON JOHN, the tonsorially challenged pop singer, was brandishing his cheque-



book this week at the Fine Art and Antiques Fair in London's Olympia. His taste was mainly for statuary, but one of the more curious objects he picked up was an 18th-century Venetian mannequin. However, John chose to overlook the event's brashness: exhibit the *faux* *d'Amour* or chair of love, made for the Earl of Dalhousie's library in the 19th century. Needless to say, chair was not meant for reading.



MARKET FOR MANDARINS

Is this job really necessary?

On Monday, John Major will announce to the Commons the conclusion of an enquiry heralding the most generalised reforms of the senior civil service this century. The report by the Cabinet Office efficiency unit, details of which are disclosed in *The Times* today, may not satisfy radical critics of current public service procedure. But it does represent a dramatic challenge to Britain's deeply entrenched mandarin culture.

The proposals start from the right premise: that the senior civil service must become more pluralistic, more receptive to private sector practice, and less dependent upon a tiny elite of fast-track trainees. Charles Trevelyan and Stafford Northcote, the founders of the modern service, argued that potential administrators be chosen for their "superior docility". It is precisely this quality that the reformed service must try to discourage in its upper echelons.

The first step suggested by the Cabinet Office is to create mechanisms making officials gain outside experience of industry, commerce and other government departments. This will broaden the perspectives of career civil servants and groom more effective policy-makers. But the report assumes, more radically, that career civil servants will be only one pool from which the senior administrators of the future will be drawn.

At the heart of the new proposals is a shift to open competition for the 620 key posts. Although the Cabinet Office has resisted calls for automatic advertisement of such jobs, the more flexible policy it proposes is in fact no different from the policy adopted by most successful private companies. According to the new recommendations, when a senior post fell vacant, the specifications of the job would be defined and the individual

case for advertisement assessed. Even if able inside candidates presented themselves, the service would be expected to look outside its ranks when new skills were needed. To prevent backsliding, each government department would be required to publish annual lists of its senior appointments and, where necessary, explain why its top jobs had remained in the hands of insiders. This is a welcome (if belated) step forward; but its success will depend upon rigorous monitoring. Ministers must also be prepared to strengthen the independence of the Civil Service Commission, thus pre-empting the charge that open competition will lead to politicisation of the service.

Liberalising the Whitehall labour market will be effective only if terms of employment are made more robust. The Cabinet Office is likely to be criticised for its rejection of fixed term contracts, which have been introduced in the New Zealand government. Yet the increasing aversion of the private sector to this sort of arrangement is suggestive: many employers have found that fixed periods of employment make dismissal in mid-term more difficult and certainly more expensive.

The Cabinet Office proposes instead to introduce a far more detailed form of contract which should make it easier to sack poor performers and time-servers and end the presumption of tenure. Having rejected the fixed term option, the government must ensure that this reform of dismissal procedures is carried out without compromise. It should also examine its own lamentable record in the reduction of white-collar civil service jobs over the last ten years. The first and most painful question which must be asked before a civil service job is put on the open market is whether it needs to exist at all.

THE END OF WHITE RULE

South Africa should count on checks and balances not angels

History's bloody lesson is that ruling oligarchies do not peacefully relinquish power. This week South Africa defied that rule when President F. W. de Klerk agreed to a constitution which on April 27 next year will bring 350 years of white rule to an end.

The euphoria that greeted the event was understandable — all the more so as it brought to a close 23 months of negotiations during which the process was threatened by violence. Some 12,000 lives have been lost in the three years since Mr de Klerk released Nelson Mandela from prison, and effectively signed away the apartheid state.

The signing of the constitution is unlikely to end the violence. Next year's election will place great strains on a country not noted for tolerance. Nevertheless, it could also fracture the forces of right-wing and Inkatha opposition as they debate the merits of joining a movement they have been unable to stop. If the event itself was a cause of wonder, examination of the document it produced tempers any sense of the miraculous.

It was the belief that a failure to reach a settlement could unleash terminal violence, and the perception that the government's own constituency was ebbing away, which eventually drove the African National Congress and the government to negotiate against the clock. The resulting interim constitution for a government of national unity which will govern South Africa until 1999 was cobbled together by frenzied trading in the style of an Oriental bazaar.

Not only does it fall far short of the government's own bottom line for a power-sharing interregnum. But the Bill of Rights fails to resolve the struggle between equality and liberty, between the individual's need for freedom and the ANC's agenda to right apartheid's wrongs. So it has produced a probably permanent source of trouble for

the judges who will have to resolve its ambiguities. More seriously, perhaps, given the fears of South Africa's threatened minorities and their undoubted proclivity for violent remedies, is the fudging of the whole issue of federalism by both government and the ANC. These are two parties historically hostile to any concept of devolved power. The result is that the nine regions that will make up the nominally federal state will have extensive functions but no real independent powers as a counterweight to central government.

Given the realities of South African politics — including polls which show that the African National Congress could well achieve 60 per cent of the national vote — even those checks and balances which remain may be illusory. Indeed, the real check on the majority riding roughshod over individual freedom and minority interests would seem to be not constitutional but political. Mr Nelson Mandela and the ANC will be to some extent constrained from alienating white opinion and investment or the loyalty of those institutions on which their ability to govern will depend, most notably the security establishment and the civil service.

One of the founding fathers of the American constitution, Alexander Hamilton, wrote that if men were angels institutions would prove unnecessary. It is to be hoped that when they negotiate the final constitution the founding fathers of the new South Africa will place greater reliance on checks and balances than on the angelic nature of man. To do so, however, will require the ruling majority to shed some of the powers it will shortly acquire — an even greater miracle than the one which this week ushered in the end of white rule on the southern tip of Africa.

GRADING TRADING

Total deregulation of Sunday shopping is the only answer

When the Shops Act, which determines what can and cannot be sold on Sundays, was passed in 1950, only one married woman in four had a job. Frozen food barely existed and many kitchens did not even contain a fridge. Shopping was a daily ritual for most housewives, who had to go to different shops to buy meat, fish, bread and vegetables.

Since then the world has changed somewhat. Now nearly three in four married women work. A week's worth of food can be bought in one huge supermarket shop and stored in the fridge or freezer. Cleaning materials, cosmetics, children's clothes and even children's books are on sale in the big supermarkets. Corner shops are used mainly for topping up.

At last MPs now have a chance to make the law more closely reflect the real world. It is not so much the frequently cited anomalies of the Shops Act that are irritating — pornography can be sold on a Sunday but not a Bible, a whisky bottle but not a baby's bottle — but the fact that restrictions exist at all. The best solution in the new Sunday Trading Bill, published yesterday, is the one that allows shops to open and close when they like and to sell what they like, in response to consumer demand.

Those that wish to "keep Sunday special" are welcome to do so — for themselves. Deregulation of Sunday trading is not intended to force anyone to shop or work on a Sunday or to prevent them from going to church. But the very small minority of strict Sabbath-observers need not impose their practices on the rest of the population. Roughly two-

thirds of the public and over 80 per cent of women want to see Sunday shopping made easier. MPs should listen to them.

It would be a brazen rejection of public opinion were Parliament to vote for the most restrictive option that has been placed before it. Many MPs will be tempted instead to back the compromise, which allows small shops to open when they like, but limits big shops to six hours' trading. This limit is unnecessary and bureaucratic. Supermarkets that have been flouting the law on Sunday opening already open for fewer hours on Sundays. Small shops do not compete directly with them. They serve people who have run out of milk or creamed horseradish on a Sunday morning, not those who want to fill a whole trolley.

The Home Office was wise to concede that no shop assistants should be forced to work on Sundays and to outlaw any discrimination based on a refusal to do so. This should present no difficulty to the stores. Students are increasingly looking for weekend jobs to support themselves through higher education. Many women want to work on Sundays while their husbands are at home with the children. Some existing shopworkers will be glad to earn substantial overtime.

The shops, meanwhile, will have to throw away smaller quantities of perishable food if they are open every day. A portion of the costs of an extra day's opening may be passed on to consumers, but some will be offset by higher turnover. If people can shop at leisure on Sundays, fewer will come home to an empty fridge on weekday evenings.

'Grey suits' in the health service

From the Director of the Institute of Health Services Management

Sir, Manager-bashing has once again become news ("Health chiefs hit back in battle of the grey suits", report, November 18). The NHS has gone through a phenomenal upheaval with the introduction of the reforms in 1991. Managers have been faced with organisational change, financial constraints and demands from government-inspired initiatives, such as *The Health of the Nation* (1992) and the Patient's Charter of 1991.

Managers have delivered the required changes. They have delivered improvements in patient care, as have clinicians. They have done so within strict financial constraints and with the minimum disruption to patient services and NHS staff. It has been done with only a small increase in management and administrative costs.

After the last uproar about the increased number of managers, very little publicity was given to the explanation — i.e. that most of the increase could be explained by the reclassification of people such as senior nurses rather than by mass recruitment of administrative and managerial staff (the "men in grey suits"). The NHS is still cheap to run. Management and administration accounts for only 2 per cent of the overall NHS budget. Managers are efficient and they are effective.

Weak management is expensive and leads to ineffective health care. The new proposals have the potential to create exactly what Mr Redwood wants: strong, streamlined and effective management. No manager in the NHS would wish for anything less.

Yours etc,
RAY ROWDEN,
Director,
The Institute of Health
Services Management,
39 Chalton Street, NW1,
November 18.

From the Chairman of the Parkside NHS Trust

Sir, The Secretary of State for Wales, in the statement you reported on November 17 (later editions), spoke of the possibility of "an over-enthusiasm for administration and management" in the NHS. Surely he confuses the problem with the solution?

The NHS rightly identified the need during the 1980s to improve the quality of its management, and NHS trusts have brought the possibility of genuinely local management to their staff.

Mr Redwood is wrong, however, if he believes that this management "fix" has been completed, and that our attention should now move to other matters. The effective management of the largest organisation in Europe, whether locally in our hospitals, or strategically at the centre, cannot be delivered by a single injection. It requires years of continuing learning and practical experience by all those working in the service.

Meanwhile, Mr Redwood must be heartened by the changes to the regional structure of the NHS in England announced last month by the Secretary of State for Health. Those who doubted the resolve to remove layers of administration and encourage successful local health care within national strategies have been greatly reassured.

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR CAMPBELL DAVIS,
Chairman,
Parkside NHS Trust,
The Medical Centre,
7e Woodfield Road, W9.

From Ms Caroline Flint

Sir, I was disappointed that after John Redwood's foray into reality, in voicing his disapproval of the government's health reforms — creating 1,500 administrators, 20 doctors — he was pounced upon by Virginia Bottomley's thought police and dragged back into a world of complete fantasy.

Yours faithfully,
CAROLINE FLINT,
256 Chiswick Village, W4.

Wrong rectory

From Canon G. D. Fuller

Sir, I refer Mr N. J. Moore (letter, November 12) to Charles Kingsley's *His Letters and Memories of his Life* by his wife, vol. II, p. 126, where she relates:

"The opening of 1862 found him once more settled at Eversley... and, while sitting at breakfast one spring morning, his wife reminded him of an old promise. 'Rise, Maurice, and Mary have all got their book, and baby must have his.' He made no answer, but got up at once and went into his study, locking the door. In half an hour he returned with the story of little Tom. This was the first chapter of 'The Waterbabies', written off without a flaw."

As the book was originally published in fortnightly parts, it is possible that some of this strange but enduring work was written at other places. Ithen Abbas and Duxford Mill have staked their claim alongside Malham Tarn House, cited by Mr Moore. However, the point of my previous letter (November 5) was that none of Kingsley's "parable in seeming Tom-follies" could possibly have been written at Chelsea Rectory.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM FULLER,
Eversley Rectory,
Basingstoke, Hampshire,
November 13.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Increased access to the countryside

From the President of the Country Landowners Association

Sir, Simon Jenkins ("Where cash is the main crop", November 13) is right to stress the need for landowners to improve the management of the countryside and provide access for the public. However, he is wrong that "nobody has a policy" on these problems, which stem directly from the absurdities of the common agricultural policy.

The Country Landowners Association, for one, has clear policies in both areas, and is advocating them both in Brussels and in Whitehall. In its 1991 report, "A Better Way Forward", the CLA called for a practical programme of establishing and managing access, with greater co-operation all round.

This programme, which has been widely welcomed and is producing positive results, does not include a "right to roam". The UK countryside is a work place in a densely populated land. Comparisons with other countries, particularly Scandinavia, are misleading. Densities are much lower there, but even so, strains are already developing. Managed access is needed to protect all concerned, as well as the environment.

Mr Jenkins is also right to see countryside conservation as central to the case for defending farm subsidies. Under the CLA's environmental land management services policy, landowners already offer a menu of conservation works in return for appropriate payments. Where this policy has been taken up imaginatively, it too has been a great success.

Country planners, far from being "impotent" as Mr Jenkins alleges, are all too often the reverse, with unimaginative and restrictive planning policies severely inhibiting economic development in the countryside. Protecting the countryside costs money and landowners must be able to use all their assets to create new income and employment opportunities.

The enterprise culture must not end at the de-restriction sign. This does not mean wall-to-wall concrete in the countryside. It means an imaginative and balanced approach to the new priorities there.

Yours faithfully,
HUGH DUBERLY,
President,
Country Landowners Association,
16 Belgrave Square, SW1,
November 15.

From Sir Julian Rose

Sir, Simon Jenkins has tantalisingly backed Oliver Walton's "public access" proposal as the proper price for subsidised farming, but seems unaware that approximately 80 per cent of the £3 billion being spent on subsidising farms currently goes to

just 20 per cent of the farmers — those who, like Mr Walton, are the most intensive producers in the land.

Mr Walton and his fellow barley barons have little to lose by allowing public access to their monocultural pastures as no one will want to visit them anyway. A few wildflowers around the edges are hardly going to make the difference.

Meanwhile, the rapidly dwindling majority of medium/small mixed farmers, of which I am one, are left to fight over the subsidy crumbs grudgingly tossed our way by a government wholly uninterested in our survival. Much of this land is already crisscrossed by well-protected public footpaths.

MAFF, totally at odds with public opinion, refuses to provide any financial help to existing organic farmers who directly contribute to reducing food surplus wastage while providing a rich tapestry of flora and fauna and no agrochemical pollution.

If Mr Jenkins is right — and I believe he is — that the public care deeply about the future of the countryside, then they must decide which of these models they wish to support.

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN ROSE,
Pash Hill Farm Cottage,
Goring Heath, Oxfordshire.

From Mr James Smart

Sir, How my heart bleeds for poor Mr Oliver Walton, worrying about his right to a government handout of £125,000. I wonder how many businesses could have been saved during this recession if their owners had been lucky enough to be farmers.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES SMART,
The Old Rectory, 54 Oxford Road,
Newbury, Berkshire,
November 13.

From Mr Christopher Jones

Sir, The suggestion that the public ought to be permitted unrestricted access over farm land in return for the subsidies which they as taxpayers pay to the farmers will not, I feel, find much support amongst our farming community. A commercial proposition from a footpath walker may have more appeal.

May I suggest our farmers convert some of their redundant farm buildings for use as cheap cold-storage accommodation. A full farmhouse breakfast as part of the deal might make the proposition doubly rewarding for both ramblers and farmer.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER JONES,
69a St John's Road, Boxmoor,
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire,
November 15.

Driftnet ban

From Ms Mary Munson

Sir, In 1991, the European Community banned the use of driftnets more than 2.5 kilometres long in EC waters. This was because these curtain-like fishing nets catch and kill a variety of species besides those targeted. Dolphins, porpoises, whales, sharks, turtles and seabirds are only some of the victims of these lethal nets, which have been condemned in three UN resolutions.

Off the UK shores, the largest driftnet fleet belongs to the French tuna fishermen. Unlike the other vessels operating in the north-east Atlantic tuna fishery, some from the UK, the French fleet was granted a phase-out period before it must comply with the EC ban.

On Monday, November 22, the EC Council of fisheries ministers meets to consider whether to extend France's "temporary" exemption from the ban.

The French government claims that its five-kilometre driftnets cause no ecological harm. This claim is absurd. French scientists estimate that 1,700 dolphins were killed by French nets in one season; since little is known about affected dolphin populations, calculations of the risk are impossible.

Looking at dolphin populations alone would also ignore the effects on populations of seabirds, turtles, whales and the many species of fish being swept up in these massive nets.

I urge the UK government and concerned public to express their opposition to granting French fishermen further permission to flout the EC driftnet ban.

Yours sincerely,
MARY MUNSON
(Wildlife campaigner),
Greenpeace,
Canonbury Villas, N1,
November 19.

War history

From Mr Peter Liddle and Dr Hugh Cecil

Sir, Your November 11 leader, "History's trenches", quite rightly draws attention to the need to question the still dominant popular orthodoxies about the first world war: for instance, that all the battles were futile; that all the generals were fools; that all the soldiers were disillusioned about fighting for their country.

What is at stake here is clear thinking — and historical accuracy. Nobody would deny that Wilfred Owen's verses are a powerful and valuable record of individual experience, nor that some military "top brass" did poorly. To generalise, however, from the most painful or unforgivable examples, about the feelings of the combatants or the conduct of the war, is bad history. The work of reappraisal is being

seriously taken in hand. Next September there will be an opportunity for a wide public to attend an international conference, "The War Experienced, 1914-1918", organised by Leeds University as part of a week of commemoration in this city. There will be 45 speakers covering home and battlefield experience from Russia, Western Europe, the US, Turkey, Australia and the French and English colonies.

What is clear from recent scholarship is that the *Oh What a Lovely War* school of first world war history is quite as inadequate in explaining this vast and complex subject as any long-discredited jingoistic treatment.

Yours faithfully,
PETER LIDDLE (First World War Personal Experience Archive),
HUGH CECIL
(School of History),
The University of Leeds,
Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS2 9JT.

Church finances

From Mr R. C. Woods

Sir, The letter (November 18) from Andrew Purkis of the Archbishop of Canterbury's office shows the appalling insensitivity of those in charge of the financial affairs of the Church of England.

As a regular communicant and a churchwarden I find myself having to tell our parishioners that they will have to increase their giving, but nowhere do I see or hear of compensating economies by the Church

authorities. I trust that the review being carried out by Coopers & Lybrand will point out that any organisation that suffers a decrease in income should seek economies before putting up the price of their product.

I want my money to pay for my own parish priest and the maintenance of our own lovely church rather than to support suffragan bishops, archdeacons and all the paraphernalia of the Church of England.

It is time to cut our cloth according to our means.

Yours faithfully,
R. C. WOODS,
3 Edensor Road, Meads,
Eastbourne, East Sussex,
November 19.

'Outrage' at form of exam results

From the Secretary of the Headmasters' Conference

Sir, It is hard to express adequately the sense of outrage experienced by many of my colleagues when the examination results were published in your newspaper, among others, on November 17. The wilful determination of the Department for Education to persist with the use of age cohorts (i.e. all children of the age of 15) rather than year groups (all the children in year 11) has once again produced significant understatement of schools' performance.

Not only do children whose birthdays, perhaps by only a few days, fall outside the age cohort find that their results are not included, but in the year when they are 15 and they are taking no examinations they are included in the denominator.

This system produces other anomalies: a school admitting girls to the sixth form whose sixteenth birthdays occurred after September 1 found they were included in the denominator while their GCSE results were credited (quite properly) to their previous school.

Whatever administrative convenience may stem from a system based on birth dates it makes a nonsense of the way schools actually operate. We give notice that from next year the Independent Schools Information Service will collect and publish the same information as the Department for Education, but based on year groups, and the dramatic discrepancies will become obvious.

I feel sorry for the boy with an early September birthday whose ten A grades simply did not count and for the many schools with an impeccable 100 per cent of pupils achieving five GCSEs A-C who appear with outcomes of 80 per cent or more. That *The Times* put such information in league tables merely compounds the disinformation.

Yours faithfully,
V. S. ANTHONY, Secretary,
Headmasters' Conference,
130 Regent Road, Leicester,
November 18.

South Bank funding

From Mr Michael Turner

Sir, The South Bank Centre is unique in this country in being the only arts centre to receive direct Arts Council funding. It currently receives £13.7 million, making it the largest single Arts Council client, whereas the combined grants of the three London orchestras taking part in the Hoffmann enquiry amount to £2.3 million.

Together with many of my colleagues in The Philharmonia Orchestra, I simply do not understand where all this money goes. The sum given to the South Bank exceeds the total grant made to the entire Welsh Arts Council, and is close to double the figure deemed appropriate for the Royal Opera House (excluding ballet). Yet the South Bank has no permanent company to pay, no expensive singers, conductors' and orchestral fees to meet.

Furthermore, the South Bank Centre charges rental to every organisation that uses the hall (including its resident orchestra), receives commission on all tickets sold (whether sold by its staff or not) and receives income from the restaurants, bars and shops on its premises. And it still manages to make an operating loss!

I feel that the British public have the right to know what is happening to their money.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL TURNER
(Steward, Musicians' Union),
49 Rayleigh Road, SW19.

If you say so

From Mr D. C. Johnson

Sir, Professor Jean Aitchison's concept of an English language evolving by misuse, as reported by Valerie Grove ("Of diphthongs and the joys of a double negative", November 17), suggests that I am destined to cringe ever more frequently at solecisms such as "the government are", "the companies who", "the weather forecast" and "ay momentous" pour from the lips of announcers, news-readers and politicians.

Yours faithfully,
D. C. JOHNSON,
Highfield,
Yarborough Road, Lincoln,
November 17.

Judicial benchmark

From Sir John Laty

Sir, Recent obiter dicta by High Court judges on subjects such as penal reform (letters, October 16, 20, 21, 23) remind me of a practice adopted by the late Mr Justice Cassels, a great judge of his time. In front of him, on the bench, he used to place a large notice. The side facing the court was blank. On the side facing himself was the legend in huge capitals. Keep Your Trap Shut.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN LATY,
(High Court Judge, 1965-89),
16 Daylesford Avenue,
Roehampton, SW15,
November 11.

PROFILE 25

The men who put Leyland DAF back on the road



MELVYN MARCKUS 24

Questions that need answers at Queens Moat



SPORT 37-44

Ghostbuster rallies to the British cause



WEEKEND SPORTING FIXTURES

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THE TIMES

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 20 1993

US group may pay £830m for Tiphook containers



Montague: high price

By MARTIN WALLER AND PHILIP ROBINSON

TIPHOOK. Robert Montague's debt-plagued trailer and container rental company, has reached tentative agreement with Transamerica, one of the biggest names in American transport, for the sale of its container division for £830 million. While a sale had been expected, the price Tiphook hopes to raise is well in excess of what the market had expected, and the company's share price, after a day of gyrations, ended up 19p at 63p. The shares had been sliding all week, from 95p as the market opened on Monday. The City took the view that if the deal, which is highly conditional and

not legally binding, goes through, then it could prove the saving of Tiphook, over whose future viability there have been significant doubts. Gary Klesch, whose Klesch & Co is making a market in the company's bonds, commented: "We were taking the view that the company was operating on a knife edge but could trade through. We're pleasantly surprised by these terms. If the deal is consummated, it would put the company back on an even keel." If the container business is sold, Tiphook will be left with its trailer rental side and a marginally profitable rail business. The company said outline terms had been agreed at a price of £830 million less associated debt, which would not exceed £119

million and will be assumed by Transamerica. "However, no assurance can be given at this stage as to the conclusion of the negotiations," a formal statement stressed. "Transamerica will be undertaking further due diligence and the final terms of the sale have yet to be negotiated." A circular will go to shareholders by the end of the year, also detailing the structure and future trading policy of the slimmed-down group. The deal would need the blessing of Tiphook's shareholders, while its bankers will also wield considerable influence. It would cut debts currently at £1.2 billion and leave a company with roughly matching tangible assets of perhaps £400 million. But

analysts believe Tiphook will still need a highly-dilutive rights issue or some other financial reconstruction before it is fully viable again. Executives at the \$4.3 billion Transamerica Corporation of San Francisco, declined to say how long it had been talking to Tiphook or quantify the value of the assets it hopes to buy. The Americans expect to complete the deal by the end of the year. A Transamerica spokesman said: "We believe we are paying a fair price." Transamerica has hedged its bets, signing an exclusivity deal with Tiphook and requiring a payment of £20 million should the container side be sold to a third party. Until now the two have been rivals with no

commercial relationship. Tiphook has a slightly larger share of the container leasing market than Transamerica, and together they could mount a serious challenge to Genstar, the market leader, which is owned by GE Capital, new owner of the GPA Irish aircraft leasing group. Nancy Stroker, debt analyst at Fitch Investors Service, the US credit agency, has affirmed the rating on Transamerica after the announcement. She said: "I think this is a good acquisition for them and it makes sense. They have a good capital base because they have sold businesses and Tiphook was an interested seller."

Tempus, page 25

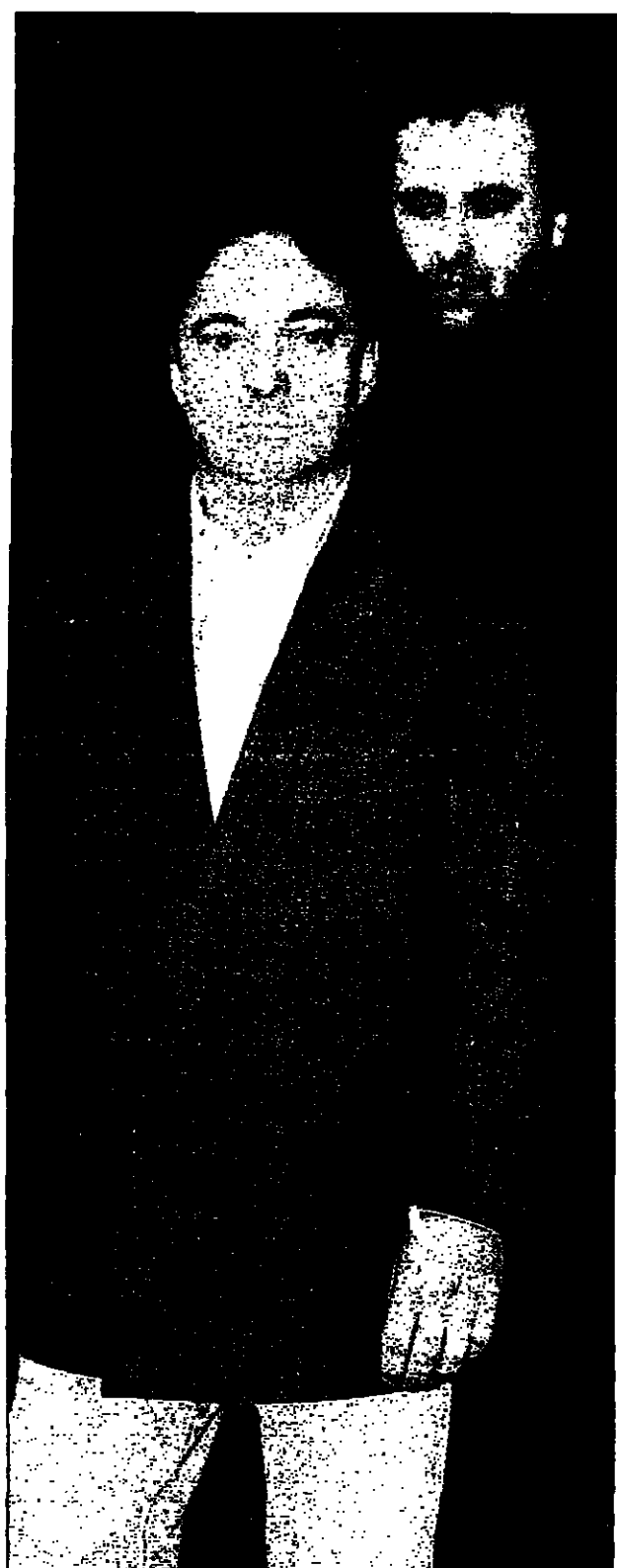
Ramsden goes free after guilty pleas

By CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT

TERRY Ramsden, one of the most flamboyant figures in the City in the 1980s, was yesterday given a two-year suspended sentence by an Old Bailey judge for fraudulently inducing investment in his insolvent company. He pleaded guilty to four charges under the Prevention of Fraud Act, involving about £40 million of investment. He had originally faced 17 charges, most of which were dropped by the prosecution. Mr Ramsden, 41, the archetypal Essex man who once had a string of 75 racehorses and was reputed to be the biggest gambler in the history of British horseracing, amassed a trading fortune in the Japanese securities market. Judge Pownall QC told the postman's son from north London, who was once reputed to be the 57th-richest man in Britain: "From modest beginnings, you built up an honest, impressive and phenomenally successful business and that is something of which you can justifiably be very proud." Sentencing him to a suspended two-year prison term, the judge added: "It's all the more sad that by your pleas you have had to acknowledge recklessness."

Mr Ramsden, QC, prosecuting for the Serious Fraud Office, said Mr Ramsden had had a "fairly meteoric rise in fame and fortune in the City before, unhappily, meeting a meteoric fall". He had not been deliberately dishonest, but reckless. Mr Ramsden said the case was the most complicated the SFO had ever brought to court. The vehicle for his career was an Edinburgh-based company called Glen International, which he bought in 1984, when it had a turnover of £18,000. By 1987, the figure had risen to £3.5 billion. But within a year, Glen crashed owing £98 million. It was all based on Mr Ramsden's knowledge of the highly specialised and "volatile" market of Japanese warrants. These are options to buy shares in Japanese companies over fixed periods at particular prices. But the converse is also true. By the end of 1986 it was "touch and go", according to Mr Ramsden. Mr Ramsden — who had left school at 16 to join a City stockbroking firm — was running out of cash to keep the massive and complex portfolio of securities afloat. By early 1987, his personal problems were also crowding in. He enjoyed a multi-millionaire lifestyle, lost an estimated £58 million on the track over the years and faced a £6 million tax bill. In 1986, his drawings from his personal company, registered in Hong Kong, exceeded £31.5 million. In 1987, the year Glen International, his dealing company, collapsed, he withdrew more than £33.5 million. Ever the optimist — it emerged at the trial that he had twice traded himself out of difficult circumstances be-

fore — Mr Ramsden went looking for alternative forms of funding when two major institutions ceased to trade with him during the first four months of 1987. He sought fresh members for his circle, travelling to Australia, where he found a company called Albatross. It entered into deals on warrants but when it was not paid on time, complained to Mr Ramsden's Japanese backers, in London and in Tokyo. At a meeting on May 22, two big Japanese institutions demanded that all their deals, worth more than £300 million, should be settled. It was from that point, the prosecution contended, that Mr Ramsden had acted recklessly, setting up investment worth £90 million without revealing the state of his companies. These crashed in September. Mr Anthony Arlidge QC, defending, said Mr Ramsden had cleared all his relatively minor English debts and taken on all the liabilities of his company, amounting to £98 million. After the company's fall, Mr Ramsden went to America. He was arrested and spent six months in prison, fighting extradition before returning to Britain. The bankrupt Mr Ramsden who stood in court yesterday was a subdued figure in an open-neck shirt and jeans. Only his mobile telephone calls in the court corridor at lunchtime reminded onlookers of what had been.



Terry Ramsden leaving the Old Bailey yesterday

Rule breaches by BZW result in £67,500 fine

By JON ASHWORTH

BARCLAYS de Zeeuw Wedd has been fined £67,500 after a long-running investigation into rule breaches by four futures traders. The fine is the biggest ever imposed by the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (Liffe). Giovanni Cameron, Louisa Gibson, Tom Rainey and Jason Willis were suspended following a series of trades in May and June 1992. They worked for BZW Futures on the Italian and German Bund booths as part of a 30-strong team on the Liffe trading floor. Mr Cameron, 29, who was in charge of the booth, was fined £2,000 and suspended from the floor for two months after a series of orders were executed at terms unfavourable to clients. Mr Rainey, 23, was fined £4,750 and suspended for two months. Ms Gibson, 25, and Mr Willis, 23, were each fined £1,000 and suspended for two weeks. The total amount involved in the trades was less than £5,000 but the incident is embarrassing for Nicholas Durlacher, Liffe's chairman,

who also heads BZW Futures. Comment on the affair was left to Daniel Hodson, Liffe's chief executive, who said: "I take satisfaction from the work carried out by our market supervision department in uncovering these matters." A Liffe tribunal found against the traders in September, prompting an appeal by BZW. Yesterday, the firm said: "BZW does not condone any disregard for the rules of Liffe, reckless or otherwise, and has taken action commensurate with Liffe's findings." Mr Cameron and Mr Rainey no longer work for the firm. The severity of the Liffe action prompted some criticism from dealers yesterday. One, who did not wish to be named, said: "The amounts in question were minuscule. They were not doing it for personal gain." John Foyle, Liffe managing director, operations, denied the regulator had been too heavy handed. He said: "There is an important point of principle here. We don't take breaching of the rules lightly, even if they don't involve millions of pounds."

BUSINESS EDITOR Robert Ballantyne

WEEKEND MONEY

BIG FREEZE



When icicles hang on the wall, loss adjusters look for evidence of blocked gutters. A householder's guide to the big freeze
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CHECK UP

The cross-Channel Christmas shopping spree is under way. But check on insurance and beware dodgy wines
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HIGH RISK



Warrants offer a useful route into investment trusts, but are very high-risk vehicles for inexperienced investors
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TOP PENSIONS

Personal pension performers: a new survey reveals which are the good, the bad, and the middling
Page 30

British Gas sells Ontario unit for £614m

By ROSS TIEMAN INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Gas is selling its biggest overseas investment, an 85 per cent stake in Consumers Gas of Canada for £614 million (£614 million), realising an effective profit of £120 million on a business bought just three years ago. Consumers, with a million customers in Ontario and New York state, is being bought by Interprovincial Pipeline System, an Alberta company that operates a 3,300-mile oil pipeline. Cedric Brown, British Gas

chief executive, said his company could use the proceeds from the sale, amounting to £1.5 billion after borrowing reductions are taken into account, more profitably elsewhere in the world. Directors denied that British Gas's biggest overseas investment had been ill-judged, insisting that the liberalisation of gas markets in Eastern Europe, Latin America and elsewhere could not have been anticipated three years ago. "There is certainly potential to gain better rates of return for our shareholders from in-

vesting in other places," Mr Brown said. "It makes a lot of sense to take a very good offer." British Gas has concluded that despite uncertainty over Britain's regulatory regime in the wake of a monopoly commission enquiry, its core UK transmission business and North Sea assets are sufficient to provide a stable foundation for riskier ventures in developing countries. "At the time of privatisation in 1986 it was very clearly signalled in the prospectus that the company was going to grow its business overseas," Mr Brown said. Directors

insist British Gas has more overseas opportunities than funds to invest. An insight into the company's intentions was provided yesterday when it reached agreement on details of its £50 million half share in a project to pipe natural gas to 600,000 consumers in Bombay over the next decade. The venture, with Gas Authority of India, is one of several that underline the demand for British Gas expertise as use of natural gas surges around the world. The Bombay company will also provide its natural gas from an offshore field for use

in low-pollution vehicles, an area where British Gas gained expertise through its Consumers' purchase. The deal provides for 20 per cent of the venture to be floated in future. With projects such as power stations in Malaysia and gas production in Vietnam under development, the company aims to be the world's leading international gas group. The inflow of funds will trim gearing from 48 to about 39 per cent. But British Gas plans to reinvest the cash within three years.

Tempus, page 25

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Midday trading figure				6pm	

LONDON CLOSING PRICES

MARKETS IN DETAIL PAGE 26, SHARE PRICES PAGE 35

Questions to be asked at Queens Moat's AGM

I appreciate that I have devoted not a few words to the subject of Queens Moat Houses of late but, in the wake of the appointment of DTI inspectors to investigate the company, and ahead of inevitable drama at the AGM scheduled for later this month, I fear, like Wilde, I can resist anything other than temptation.

It is interesting to note that the decision by Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, to appoint Patrick Phillips QC and accountant Adrian Burn to investigate Queens Moat's affairs appears to have been welcomed by almost all parties concerned.

Queens Moat's directors, led by chairman Stanley Metcalfe and chief executive Andrew Coppel, were quick to let it be known that they "welcomed" the appointment of inspectors to "look into various matters drawn to the DTI's attention by the company".

John Bairstow, founder and

former chairman of Queens Moat, also "welcomed" the investigation but stressed that, in his opinion, the enquiry should embrace the disparity of more than £1 billion in the controversial property valuations carried out by Weatherall Green & Smith and Jones Lang Wootton.

As for Queens Moat's shareholders they, presumably, welcome the prospect of eventually discovering the pattern of events which led up to last March's suspension of the share price — along with the inspectors' findings as to the former management's culpability — but they must be equally, if not more, concerned with the ongoing scenario. Following the departure of former Tory minister David Howell and ex-NatWest banker John Gale, the sole non-executive on QMH's board, albeit for only three days a week, is chairman Stanley Metcalfe. Enter, not surprisingly, the QMH Shareholders' Action Group which has enlisted the support

of, among others, Sir Anthony Beaumont-Dark. So, to the jaundiced eye, we would appear to have Coppel and finance director Andrew Le Poidevan (both former employees of QMH's new adviser Morgan Grenfell) presuming that the inspectors will focus on the matters the new management brought to the DTI and Stock Exchange's attention — such as the alleged illegal payment of dividends in 1991 and 1992 — with the former management, along with shareholders, eager that the inspectors' roving eyes will embrace the valuation controversy and the manner in which the much mooted debt/equity swap on behalf of QMH's 65 banks is being brought about.

I would not dream of prejudging the inspectors' intentions but, to my way of understanding, the crucial remit is to investigate and report on the "affairs" of QMH and such wording is traditionally chosen in order to permit the likes of Phillips and



Melvyn Marcus

Burn all the scope they require.

All of which leaves shareholders to dwell on the AGM scheduled for November 29 and Monday's EGM, due to take place at the Chartered Accountant's Hall, in the City, albeit an event which Metcalfe & Co wish to adjourn until immediately after the AGM.

It has to be said that the Royal Institution of Chartered Survey-

ors' decision last week not to pronounce on the valuation fiasco is of precious little help to shareholders who are left to ponder the fact that Weatherall, having valued QMH's hotels at £2 billion in December 1991, subsequently produced a 1992 valuation of £1.86 billion — a figure later revised down to £1.35 billion. Jones Lang's flashing pencils produced a draft valuation of £640 million, later raised to £861 million.

How, with disparities ranging from £18 billion to £640 million, can shareholders be expected to adopt the 1992 report and accounts? Even QMH's current directors have been unable to fully explain the £1.3 billion valuation decline in the space of twelve months — witness auditor Coopers & Lybrand's qualification.

And, if such a decline is inexplicable, should shareholders accept the conclusion that net assets have fallen to less than half QMH's paid up share capital? How can a sensible

debate be held at the EGM — either on Monday or a week later — while a £1 billion plus question mark hangs in the air?

In the event, Coopers chose to write off £803.9 million via the profit and loss account: the major contribution to QMH's astonishing 1992 loss of £1,047.5 million. Such treatment of a "provision for diminution in value" can, under the Companies Act 1985, only be made if the "reduction is expected to be permanent" — a directive which Coopers has clearly adhered to. And yet Metcalfe, in the chairman's report, openly proclaims that the directors are "optimistic about the long term recovery potential" of QMH's asset values.

There are, of course, not a few other questions which shareholders might wish to raise. Such as: What is the breakdown of the £32 million set aside to cover the costs of the QMH rescue? What fees are being paid to Morgan

Grenfell (adviser to QMH), SG Warburg (adviser to the banks), Coopers & Lybrand (writers off of the inexplicable), Grant Thornton (working on the capital reconstruction on behalf of the banks) Weatherall and Jones Lang (roles well publicised) not to forget lawyers Allen & Overy. What form of contracts do Messrs Metcalfe, Coppel and Le Poidevan enjoy? Will they be awarded share options after the debt for equity swap? Surely any incentive equity: placing them in the same position as shareholders. Should Metcalfe receive any share options, bearing in mind that he is a non-executive director?

Are success fees being paid to advisers, including any of QMH's bankers? Why not, as The Times suggested earlier this month, publish the Grant Thornton report in its entirety? A little transparency at QMH would be no bad thing.

Doubts over large fall in non-EC trade gap

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S trade deficit with countries outside the European Community fell sharply last month but there was widespread doubt that the trade performance is really this encouraging and also whether it can be sustained.

The non-EC trade deficit fell to £293 million from a down-revised £921 million in September, said the Central Statistical Office. The sharp narrowing of the shortfall was due to a jump in exports of nearly 9 per cent and a 3.5 per cent drop in imports.

But the CSO said recent big changes in the size of the visible deficit make it difficult to assess the trend, hinting at concern about the accuracy of the picture painted even by this trade series. Figures for trade with the EC, about two-thirds of total British trade, are known to be clouded in mystery because of teething problems with the new European Intrastat system.

Richard Jeffrey of Charterhouse Tilney, the broker, said: "You have to remember this sort of data is very erratic from month to month. Everyone should get out their rulers and draw a straight line to eliminate the ups and downs."

Britain has clearly benefited from sterling's depreciation but there are doubts in the City about whether imports

can remain so subdued with consumer spending rising healthily.

Other figures from the CSO yesterday confirmed that the economy grew modestly in the third quarter, led by consumer spending. Gross domestic product was 0.6 per cent higher in the three months from July to September against the previous three months and 1.9 per cent up on a year ago. The quarter to quarter figure was unchanged from the CSO's preliminary estimate of GDP while the year-on-year rise in growth was revised down marginally from 2.0 per cent.

There was some concern in the City about the breakdown of economic growth which is being led by strong consumer spending rather than by exports and manufacturing. But the Treasury said the GDP figures confirmed recovery was taking place across a broad front. On the trade front, it gave warning against placing too much emphasis on one month's non-EC trade figures, but said the exports trend was clearly improving.

The US trade deficit widened in September to \$10.89 billion from \$10.05 billion in August, according to the latest figures from the Commerce Department. Exports rose 2.1 per cent, but imports increased 3.4 per cent.



Eddie George, Hans Tietmeyer and Edmond Alphandery, the French economics minister, at yesterday's conference

Germany still cautious on rates

By OUR ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HANS Tietmeyer, president of the Bundesbank, yesterday reaffirmed that the German central bank intended to proceed cautiously in cutting interest rates further. He insisted that the new European Monetary Institute should not be allowed to wrest control of monetary policy from individual governments.

His remarks, to a conference of bankers and industrialists in Frankfurt, suggested strongly that the Bundesbank is unwilling to relinquish any significant element of control over interest-rate policy. Herr

Tietmeyer said that the EMI, the new institution charged with co-ordinating European Community policy steps towards a single currency, should confine itself to educating opinion on what monetary stability means, but that monetary policy remained the prerogative of EC member countries.

On German rates, Herr Tietmeyer said that recent rate-cut decisions had been made in anticipation of moves by Germany's public and private sectors on the budget deficit and on pay settlements.

He said: "In our last decisions, we have already anticipated some of these developments so that we now have to stay on the cautious side."

Herr Tietmeyer gave warning against any early return to narrow bands in the exchange-rate mechanism and suggested that this view, shared by "most if not all monetary experts", would prevail for some time.

Speaking at the same conference, Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said that, in spite of signs that economic divergences in

Europe are subsiding, longer-term risks would be posed by a move to restore narrower exchange bands and to continue with stage three of monetary union as planned.

The two central bank chiefs disagreed on the need for political union. Mr George argued that policy union was not necessary for the completion of economic and monetary union, but Herr Tietmeyer said: "I am not convinced that it is necessary to have all the details in place, but we should have the will for a broad-based political union."

Pelican buys theme restaurants in US

PELICAN, the fast-expanding restaurant group chaired by Roger Myers, is buying its first theme restaurant in America for \$2.075 million. It is buying a half-interest in Café Tu Tu Tango, which has two outlets, in Miami and Atlanta. Tu Tu Tango made pre-tax profits of \$212,000 in 1992 and has \$1 million in cash, which will be used to fund expansion.

The deal is funded by a share issue and placing equivalent to 4.6 per cent of Pelican's issued equity and Pelican has the option to buy the remainder of Tu Tu Tango in due course. It already owns the Café Rouge, Rock Island Diner and Mamma Amalfi chains — as well as The City Brasserie, in the Square Mile — and has Robert Earl, the American restaurateur behind Planet Hollywood, on the board. Café Tu Tu Tango's theme is that of an artists' studio. Mr Earl becomes a full-time director of Pelican's US business.

Lynx leaps 438%

LYNX Holdings, the computer services to leisure products company, is paying £2.9 million for Financial Systems and £2.4 million for Chess Valley Computers, both software companies. The deals are being funded through the issue of 14.4 million new shares, of which 9.1 million are being placed to raise money for the sellers. Lynx pre-tax profits leapt 438 per cent to £619,000 (£115,000) for the year to end-September. A final dividend of 0.95p makes a total of 1.25p a share.

Telspec looks overseas

TELSPEC, the telecommunications equipment maker, published the pathfinder prospectus for its forthcoming £5 million flotation yesterday, and said it viewed mainland Europe and the Pacific Rim as "fertile ground for expansion". The group, which will announce the flotation price on December 2, made interim pre-tax profits of £1.94 million in the six months to end-June. Telspec was founded in the UK in 1975 by Frank Hackett-Jones, chairman and sole shareholder.

Silverdale to close

BRITISH Coal announced plans to close Silverdale Colliery, in Staffordshire, in two weeks' time, with the loss of 398 jobs. Managers and union leaders at the colliery were told of the plan by John Longdon, Midlands group director, who said the pit had lost £5.7 million in the past six months. The Silverdale closure will bring to five the number of pit closures announced by British Coal this month. In total, the five mines employ 2,488 men.

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COMPANY NEWS IN BRIEF

JURYS HOTEL GROUP
Pre-tax £2.8m (£2.18m)
EPS: 10.1p (7.6p)
Div: 2p (2p)

OFFICE ELECT MACH
Pre-tax £263,000
EPS: 1.6p (3.1p)
Div: None

BLACK ARROW GROUP
Pre-tax £346,000
EPS: 0.84p (3.52p)
Div: 0.5p (1.0p)

MMI (Int)
Pre-tax £201,000
EPS: 0.47p (LPS: 2.15p)
Div: Nil

NEEDLER GROUP
Pre-tax £52.54m
EPS: 8.2c (7.5c)
Div: —

TR PROPERTY INV (Int)
Pre-tax £2.85m (£2.2m)
EPS: 0.68p (0.50p)
Div: 0.40p (0.40p)

Interim results. All figures are in Irish currency. Company is making a 1x7.59m rights issue, at 105p a share, on a seven-for-two basis.

Figures are for 18-month period. There was a £57,000 loss last time. Turnover rose to £2,97m (£2,07m). Exceptional gain of £948,000.

Interim results. There was a profit of £1.55m last time. Turnover fell to £7.62m (£11.7m). Company said market conditions are very difficult.

There was a loss of £282,000 last time. Turnover advanced to £5.22m (£483,000). Company will change its name to Petham Communications.

Results are for three months. All figures are in Canadian currency. Last time's profit was \$2.15m. 1993 results will be below 1992 levels.

The net asset value stood at 36.2p (25.3p). Total revenue increased to £5.2m (£4.62m). Company said rental prospects more encouraging.

Bock 'aims to sell 90%' of Lonrho firms

DIETER Bock, German joint chief executive of Lonrho, has given his plan for the reduction of the sprawling corporate empire Tiny Rowland built into a "lean, financially strong and transparent" company.

The plan, unveiled to German newspapers, foresees the disposal of 90 per cent of Lonrho's 800 businesses. Mr Bock left no doubt that he aims to diminish still further the waning influence of Mr Rowland, his co-chief executive.

Mr Bock said his aim was within 18 months to make Lonrho a financial holding company with 80 operating companies.

These would be grouped in four areas — mining, agriculture, trading and hotels with a view to eventual separate

THE SUNDAY TIMES

On a chilly February night, Robert Montague swept from his powder blue Bentley into the Great Room of London's Grosvenor House hotel. For the second year in a row, he joined the prime minister's table.

Business Focus on the Tiphook developments — The Sunday Times tomorrow

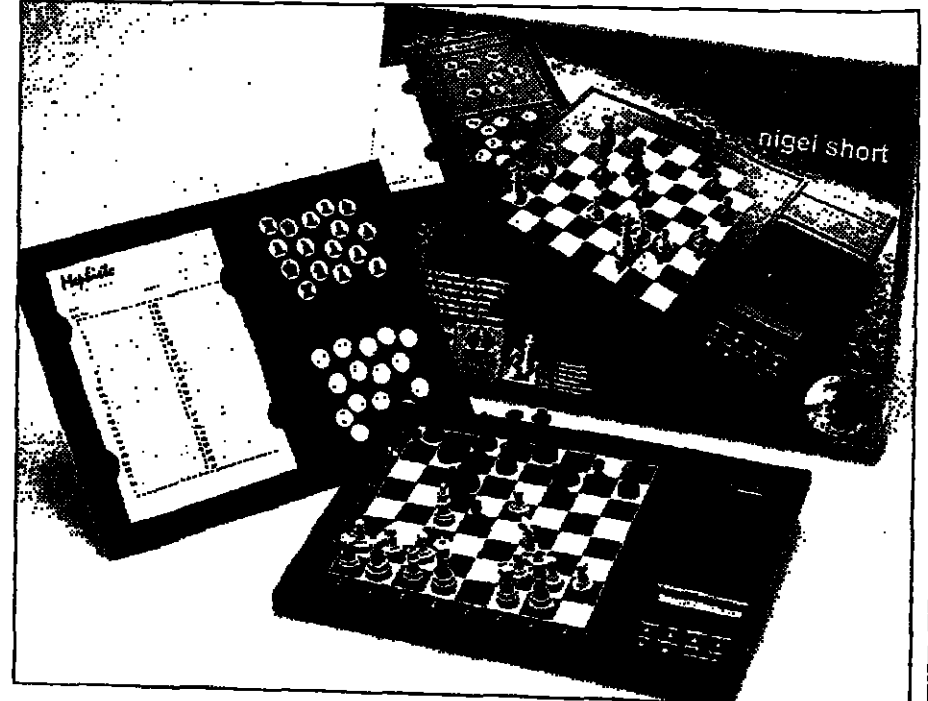
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LEYLAND DAF: John Talbot and Murdoch McKillop

Not so much accountants, more official retrievers

partners in power

Ross Tieman profiles the two recovery specialists who pulled the British arms of the truck maker back from the brink of defeat

John Talbot and Murdoch McKillop have given a new meaning to the term creative accounting. Ten months ago, when the two Arthur Andersen corporate recovery specialists were appointed receivers to Leyland DAF, the Anglo-Dutch lorry company, its survival prospects looked poor.

Soon after their arrival on January 3 they were shown the restructuring plan, drawn up by the company's Dutch bosses but not implemented for want of redundancy cash. It anticipated the closure of the company's van plant in Birmingham, the parts warehouse in Chorley, and the Albion axle plant in Glasgow, together employing 2,900 people.

Today, those businesses are trading, apparently successfully, in the hands of new owners, except Albion where it is expected that a management buy-in will be completed soon. They form part of an extraordinary federation of manufacturing companies, separately owned but selling through a common marketing company, under a common brand.

Only time will tell if they can generate the cash needed to refine and renew models and survive long-term. Some may yet find larger partners. But as McKillop

McKillop joined Arthur Andersen fresh out of university in his native Scotland. He developed a taste for insolvency work and founded the Glasgow corporate recovery section as the 1983 recession was getting into its stride. He might have stayed in Glasgow, had he not agreed to fill in while his London boss took a fortnight's holiday in mid-1990, keeping an eye on a couple of shaky companies. On Wednesday of the first week, the Michael Peters design group collapsed and he was appointed receiver. The following day, Broadwell Land was added to his workload. McKillop became a regular on the Monday shuttle.

Working together, the pair have shown a flair for keeping employees at work and engineering the survival of businesses, if not the companies that own them. They completed Broadwell's development of Plantation Wharf at Battersea, London. Appointed as two of the four receivers in the Maxwell saga, they divided the companies between them. McKillop's sale of Maxwell's British International Helicopters subsidiary to its managers set the stage for the Leyland DAF rescue.

McKillop was in Paris on February 2 "trying to sort out the French end of Crown Communications" when Talbot phoned to warn that Leyland DAF's Anglo-Dutch parent, DAF, was seeking protection from creditors. "We had absolutely no warning," McKillop recalls. "He asked me to come back as fast as humanly possible. We met one of the managing directors that night." The following morning, while Talbot stayed in London to "man the fort," McKillop headed for Leyland DAF's marketing headquarters at Thame, Oxfordshire. Confirmation of the receivership appointment came in a radio broadcast by Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade.

Teams of accountants and assistants descended on Leyland DAF's operations from offices across the country. "It was run almost like a military operation," says McKillop with satisfaction. "By the end of the first day we had 35 people on site. It peaked after three days at 65."

Discomfited by the spectacle of a speedy state-sponsored rescue of the Dutch and Belgian operations, public protests and



Manufacturing a miracle: John Talbot, left, and Murdoch McKillop are justifiably proud of their achievements in keeping the Leyland DAF businesses going

questions in Parliament, ministers took a keen interest in the team's progress. They also provided effective help, as the Arthur Andersen team acknowledged: the defence ministry maintained its purchase of army trucks contracted from Leyland, and the Post Office signalled its desire to buy more vans from Birmingham. Any plea for assistance was expedited swiftly and efficiently.

But the difficulties quickly mounted. Suppliers were owed more than £30 million. They lodged 741 claims to the ownership of parts delivered to the operations. The production lines, reliant upon just-in-time deliveries, stopped.

With £7.5 million borrowed in their own names to finance operations, Talbot and McKillop spent days trying to reassure suppliers. "We got down to a hard core of about 20 suppliers who were holding out for payment," says McKillop. "John took half and I took half and we phoned the chairman or the MD." In one case they even wound up in court, where they won.

The supplier problems coincided with a mass meeting of the workforce on February 11. The receivers warned that "all 5,500 jobs will most likely be lost" if a strike prevented resumption of production. "It was no idle threat," says McKillop. The following day they made one worker in three redundant. "For a lot

of these people it was a personal tragedy," he says. "Some had been there man and boy for 40 years. They were enormously loyal to the company."

A few days earlier, the two men had sat down and debated whether, with money fast running out and production stopped, they should abandon the rescue attempt. Reviewing the prospects of the van plant, the receivers concluded that there was a market for its products. They suggested the managers buy it, and put them in touch with Coopers & Lybrand. Three days after the MBO plans were made public, production was resumed. Another eight days, and bosses at the lorry plant began preparing their own buyout plan.

To observers, the rescue seemed to take an age. But given their complexity, events were moving at a cracking pace.

access to markets was the most critical aspect of the rescue. Developing their strategy step by step, they formed a new company, jointly with the rescued Dutch company, to market UK and Dutch-built vehicles in Britain.

The climax of the rescue came on June 11, with the sale of the Leyland assembly plant to its bosses. The deal was underpinned by a web of more than 40 contracts, many of them with the ongoing continental operation, securing long-term co-operation on sales and component supply. With manufacture of new vehicles thus assured the pair then moved on to sell the highly profitable parts business to a buy-in team. The sale of the components operations completes the jigsaw.

Both men are matter-of-fact about the

working relationship that allowed this minor miracle to happen. "We tend to think in the same way," says McKillop. "We both operate in a similar way." Says Talbot. "We have similar objectives. We trust each other." Do they ever fall out? Talbot is surprised by the question. "We are terse with each other sometimes," he concedes, eventually.

They are chips off the same block, these two. Provincially-made-good and reluctant Londoners both, they are as comfortable with people in factories, who make things, as with people in the City who merely make, or lose, money. And in an unsentimental way, they believe in the value of what they do. Workers at Leyland DAF, at the component suppliers who depend upon them, and all who care about British manufacturing have cause to be grateful for that.

To observers, the rescue seemed to take an age. But given the complexity, events were moving at a cracking pace

group, 20 years ago, this has been achieved with just a few million pounds of state aid in the form of regional selective assistance grants.

The architects of Leyland's survival are justifiably proud of their achievement. Talbot has already attracted attention for a string of high-profile rescues, including most of The Robert Maxwell Group. He grew up in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, and trained as an accountant at a small local firm. He moved to Leicester, then via Corby and Nottingham to Birmingham, where he attracted attention at Arthur Andersen's London office. He now heads the firm's worldwide corporate recovery service, out of London, at the age of 44.

TEMPUS

Tiphook hopes US cavalry will ride to the rescue

TIPHOOK'S hard-pressed shareholders are likely to rejoice at the group's agreement to sell its container division to Transamerica for £830 million. For most of 1993 all Tiphook's news has been bad. Here at least is a deal that looks as though it gives the leasing group a racing chance.

Before investors open the champagne, it is worth noting the terms of the tentative agreement. Transamerica is not committed to the deal in any way, and may well decide to reduce its offer price or walk away completely once it has looked over the business more closely. Indeed, the only binding commitment has come from Tiphook, that it will pay Transamerica £20 million if it sells the business to anyone else for a higher price.

Tiphook needs this deal badly. A combination of the rise in debts to £1.2 billion and a realistic revaluation of the group's remaining trailer and rail wagon assets are likely to leave it with minimal or negative net assets. The assets in the container division are thought to be about £600 million. If it can sell these for a £230 million premium this should restore some value to the equity and enable Morgan Grenfell to patch a restructuring package together.

But even if the disposal of the container division goes ahead on such generous terms, it would hardly leave the company's finances in rude health. Gearing is likely still to be over 200 per cent, and while this is not high for a leasing company, the group's banks are likely to apply such heavy charges and interest rates that future profitability will be tenuous. In these circumstances Tiphook's shareholders can hardly expect to escape scot-free, especially since its banks

feel they have suffered pain and will look for others to share the burden. Equity holders are likely to be asked to provide a large injection of fresh equity, or be faced with heavy dilution in a debt for equity swap by the banks, or both. Tiphook hopes to publish details of the Transamerica deal before Christmas and may accompany it with a rescue rights issue.

Therefore the market was a touch hasty in marking Tiphook's shares up 70 per cent after the deal from the low point they touched yesterday morning. The value of the equity is still deeply questionable until Transamerica puts real money on the table and the engineers of Tiphook's restructuring decide how much help they need from shareholders.

British Gas

THE sale of Consumers Gas in Canada gives British Gas and its shareholders some light relief during the interminable wait for Michael Heseltine to decide whether to break up the group or remove its domestic monopoly. At least the group can operate like a truly commercial business overseas without the sound of regulators

dogging its tracks. But the Canadian disposal and the investment in Boreas are a good indication of how the group is being driven to find higher returns in its international business to combat falling profits at home.

Consumers Gas has been a reasonable investment for British Gas. During its three years of ownership the group has earned a compound, post-tax return of 11 per cent, more than adequate for a regulated utility in the developed world.

Such returns are no longer adequate for British Gas, which wants to balance the dull outlook in its main domestic business (whatever Mr Heseltine decides), with high risk, high reward investments elsewhere. These, it hopes, will provide the necessary returns to continue driving profits and dividend growth.

The group's early experiences have been promising. Its investment in Metrogas in Argentina is thought to be showing a return of more than 30 per cent. Some of these ventures may be abject failures, but British Gas should minimise their impact by running a diverse portfolio.

The problem is that such investments tend to be small.

British Gas needs to find a further 30 such as Bombay City to replace Consumers Gas, which could prove a tall order. Until then, the cash raised from Consumers Gas will do nothing more exciting than repay some of the group's debt. This may make the management more comfortable, since interest cover could fall as low as four times this year, but it is hardly any way to drive the profits. At this time more than any other, British Gas cannot afford to lose momentum in its overseas expansion.

Stanhope

A GAGGING writ is a blunderbuss weapon that leaves much of the target unscathed and the directors of Stanhope Properties may be learning this to their cost. Last week's injunction against *Estates Times*, the property magazine, followed by threatening letters to national newspapers has apparently done little to stop copies of the Project Phoenix document from circulating in the property world, and no doubt the wider investment community.

The company's actions are the more curious in that details of the fund-raising had already been leaked — by persons unknown, says Stanhope — to the Sunday press but one can only surmise that the property magazine had spicier revelations to offer. Stanhope cannot stop the property world's grapevine and the consequence of this leak is that price-sensitive information is now circulating and could be in danger of creating a false market. At the very least, the Stock Exchange must conduct an investigation into the Stanhope leaks and, if it is serious about its new guidelines, Stanhope should be told to publish any price-sensitive information now being circulated.

IMPACT

Our recent merger transaction allows Minorco to make a far bigger impression in global markets as one of the world's largest natural resources groups.

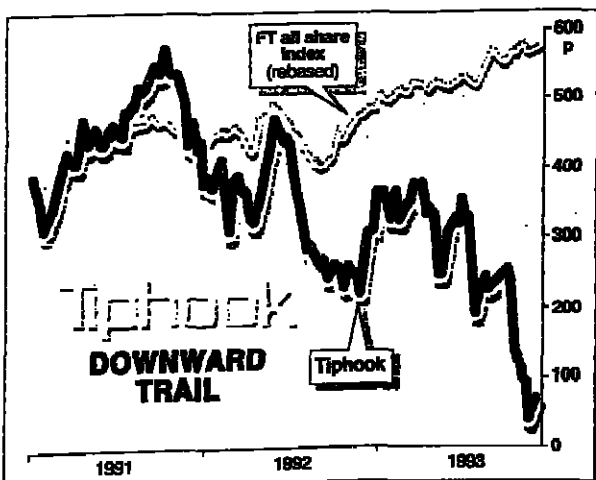
Our core operating businesses include gold, base metals, industrial minerals and pulp, paper and packaging, while our expanded geographical base now makes us a major player on the world stage.

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MINORCO

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40 HOLBORN VIADUCT, LONDON EC1P 1AJ



Seag chaot and US selling take toll

STOCK MARKET

THE breakdown of Seag, the stock exchange's computerised trading system, threw the equity market into chaos for much of the day and succeeded in depressing turnover.

The fault in the system also delayed expiry of the November series of traded options which had been scheduled for 10.30am — without the computers it was impossible to calculate movements in the index. As a result, the equity market spent a volatile session with brokers trading nervously. The options eventually expired at 2pm on the computer came back on stream. But by the close, only 514 million shares had changed hands, leaving brokers to ponder the amount of business they had lost.

The FT-SE 100 index, down almost 5 points in early

trading, saw the fall extended to 21.3 by the time Seag came back fully. Attempts at a rally proved futile, with Wall Street registering an opening fall. The index eventually closed 17.5 down at 3,108.

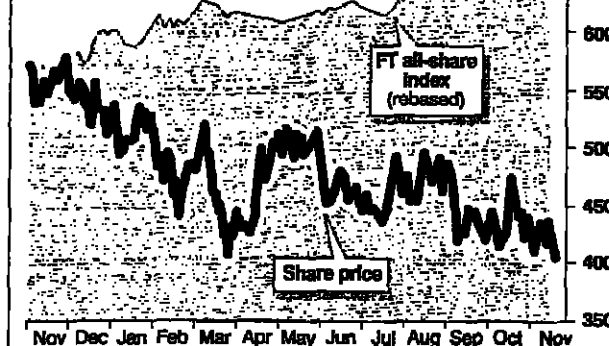
Among leaders, Smith-Kline Beecham 'A' fell 9p to 402p on the back of overnight selling from the US where pharmaceuticals remain out of favour. Dealers say that Wuerthel Schroder, the New York securities house, has turned seller of Smith-Kline.

US selling was also blamed for the slide in Vodafone, down 1p at 524p ahead of interim figures on Tuesday.

Guinness recovered an early fall to finish all-square at 451p after revealing a £1 billion corporate commercial paper programme being arranged by NatWest Capital Markets. Guinness said the move was an efficient way of raising short-term borrowing.

Leorho climbed 5p to 138p with almost 7 million

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM: SHARES SLIDE AS AMERICAN BROKER TURNS SELLER



shares traded fuelled by reports that Dieter Boock, joint chief executive, was undertaking a major restructuring involving the selling off and merging of many of the businesses. But sources close to the company say Mr Boock has been concentrating on just the trading division, which consists of 800 diversi-

fied companies, many of them tiny and dotted across Africa. This is the part of the business he is hoping to streamline, selling those that do not fit and merging others.

Tiphook, the troubled rental and trailer rental group, encountered another bout of early selling, touching a new low of 39p before

rallying to close 18p better at 62p. The company has agreed outline terms to sell its container division to Transamerica Corporation for £830 million. Tiphook started the week at 95p, before its fourth profit warning to date.

Black & Edgington, the USM-quoted maker of crowd control barriers, firmed 4p to 14p after returning to the black last year with pre-tax profits of £20,000 compared with a loss the year before of £2.9 million.

MMI, the international marketing group that is soon to change its name to Pelham Communications, returned to the black with half-year pre-tax profits of £20,000 (£222,000 loss). The group is expected to make at least £1.2 million for the full year. Bob Morton, the chairman, says its Park Avenue subsidiary has already exceeded its £900,000 profits ceiling for the year to October.

Gartmore, the financial

services group, struggled to reach a premium in first time trading touching 166p before ending the day at 170p, a premium of just 2p on the 168p offer price.

Newcomer Canadian Pizza fared little better closing at 199p compared with the original 205p offer price, a discount of 6p.

GILT Edged took their lead from the German bund losing an early lead to close near the low of the day as investors attention switched to the forthcoming Budget.

The December series of the Long Gilt touched £116 1/2 before retreating to end £1 1/2 lower at £115 1/2 as 39,000 contracts were completed.

At the longer end of the cash market Treasury 9 per cent fell £3 1/2 to £119 1/2, while at the shorter end Treasury 9 1/2 per cent managed to firm one tick to £113 1/2.

MICHAEL CLARK

MARKETS AT A GLANCE

US \$ 1.4725 (-0.0062)
German mark 2.5249 (same)
Exchange index 81.0 (same)
Bank of England official rate (4pm)

STOCK MARKET
FT-SE 100 3108.0 (-17.5)
Dow Jones 3664.39 (-20.85)
Nikkei Avg 17941.9 (-225.13)

INTEREST RATES
London Bank Base 6%
3-month Interbank 5 1/2%
US Federal Funds 2 1/4%
3-month Treas Bill 3 1/2-3 1/4%
Long Bond 8 3/4%

CURRENCIES
New York: London 1.4715
S. DM 1.7152 S. DM 2.5244
S. DM 1.5089 S. DM 2.2174
S. DM 1.5940 S. DM 8.7800
S. DM 1.0829 S. DM 158.43
S. DM 1.0638 S. DM 1.3158
London Foreign market close

GOLD
London Posing (8):
AS 375.75 PM 377.50
COB 375.75 PM 377.50
New York:
Cob 375.75-378.85

OIL
Brent Crude \$15.80 per bbl (Jan)

RETAIL PRICES
RPI 141.8 Oct (1.4%) Jan 1987=100
Denotes midday trading price

Systems failure halts share deals

BY OUR STOCK MARKET CORRESPONDENT

A SYSTEMS failure in the Stock Exchange's computerised trading system, Seag, threw City securities houses into chaos and brought business to a halt.

The breakdown, at 9.30am, lasted about an hour and a half and affected thousands of traders and investors. It forced Stock Exchange authorities to postpone expiry of the November series of traded options.

A near-normal display service was restored later in the morning using only indicative prices. Usually, transactions are executed at the levels displayed on trading screens.

At 1.30pm, the system was again shut down to bring it back on stream fully so that expiry of November options could be completed.

A Stock Exchange spokesman was unable to explain the breakdown, which resulted in below average Friday turnover of only 514 million shares. It seems that the fault was on the line linking the exchange's



Sir Andrew, chairman

computer with computers of service companies, including Reuters, Topic and Telekurs. Many brokers described as a fiasco this latest breakdown, which is certain to have cost them commission. Sir Andrew Hough Smith, the exchange chairman, is bound to receive complaints from member firms. Brokers' frustration was heightened by the continuation, unimpacted, of trading on the financial futures market.

Humberside buses sold to Stagecoach

Stagecoach Holdings, based in Scotland, is buying Grimsby Cleethorpes Transport, the Humberside bus company, for £4.4 million. GCT, which runs 100 buses and coaches and employs about 200 people, is being sold by the local councils.

Shares plunge

A profits warning from Ross Group, the consumer products group, caused a 27 per cent share fall, from 22p to 16p. The group, which last month revealed a fall in interim profits, said October trading was worse than expected.

UniChem deal

UniChem, pharmaceuticals wholesaler and retailer, is taking over Bradford Chemists' Alliance, a main pharmaceutical supplier in the Bradford area, in a £8.9 million deal.

BASF jobs go

BASF, the German chemicals group, plans to cut about 4,000 jobs next year, mainly at its German plants.

RECENT ISSUES

Abacus (140)	162	...	London Insure Mkt (100)	100	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Rothmans Int Units	419	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Rothmans (230)	241	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Spectra (200)	201	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Small Cos Inv Trst (135)	141	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Thruprid Inv Trst (100)	102	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Towry Ltd (190)	185	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Upland Int	107	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Vendome Lux Int (30)	37	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Virtuality Group (170)	255	...
Abacus (140)	162	...	Wiggins Group	34	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:		FALLS:	
JD Wetherspoon	336p (+10p)	SG Warburg	839p (-11p)
ICI	686p (+10p)	Yorks Chem	395p (-18p)
Presidio	163p (+25p)	Vodafone	524p (-11p)
Tiphook	63p (+19p)	Johnson Math	458p (-12p)
Bristol Scotts	103p (+10p)	Powerscreen	316p (-20p)
Euro Disney	415p (+12p)	Courtauld Text	562p (-12p)
Dalgety	782p (+10p)		
Savoy Hotel 'A'	798p (+10p)		

UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

European Fund	288.50	288.50	...	...
European Fund	288.50	288.50	...	...
European Fund	288.50	288.50	...	...
European Fund	288.50	288.50	...	...
European Fund	288.50	288.50	...	...

WALL STREET

Bond decline hits Dow

New York — A sharp decline in the bond market pulled Wall Street shares lower at midday, with high-technology stocks among the hardest-hit sectors. The Dow Jones industrial average fell by 20.95, to 3,664.39.

□ Tokyo — The Nikkei aver-

age, after a volatile day, closed below the psychological support level of 18,000 for the first time since March 16, ending down 225.13 at 17,941.99. Arbitrage-linked sales hit prices, and investors stood aside before the US-Japan summit.

(Reuters)

Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18
Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18
Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18
Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18
Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18	Nov 18

AEON LIFE ASSURANCE
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مكتبة ابن الأصيل



FAIR SHARES 28

Clubbing together to play the stock market

WEEKEND MONEY

THIRSTY WORK 33

Channel trips to stock up on Christmas cheer



Home rules for the big freeze

Frost, ice, gales and floods have already caused headaches for householders and the winter has hardly begun. Liz Dolan and Nicola Cole report

Frozen pipes and snow-filled attics are on the cards this weekend as we brace ourselves for more meteorological misery. Frost is forecast in all parts of Britain until at least the middle of next week. Overnight temperatures are expected to fall to between -5 and -6 degrees C (23 F). Snow is likely along the east coast.

The big chill comes as a double blow to those householders still trying to repair damage caused by the gale force winds that buffeted the country last weekend.

In an average year, wind damages more than 250,000 buildings in Britain. During the savage storms in October 1987, 1.3 million homes sustained damage that cost £286 million.

The January 1990 storms caused 78 deaths, 16 from building failures, and 1.6 million homes were damaged bringing a repair bill of just over £200 million.

The findings are taken from a paper summarising 30 years' storm damage and due to be published next year by the Building Research Establishment, along with a technical digest for architects and engineers.

Next month the BRE will present a revised wind-load code of practice to the British

Standards Institution. This will adjust the methods by which building designers calculate loadings.

Roofs are especially vulnerable because wind speed increases with height. As wind blows around corners and over roofs, it accelerates further, generating suction forces that can tear away slates, tiles and gable ends.

Wind force multiplies by the square of the wind speed, which in turn increases with height above ground level. If

Wind generates suction forces that can tear away slates, tiles and gable ends

wind speed doubles, wind force grows fourfold; when it triples, nine times the force is produced.

Roofs suffer at least 63 per cent of all reported devastation. The BRE says it is vitally important to inspect and maintain roofs regularly and to pay particular attention to ridges, eaves, verges and chimney stacks.

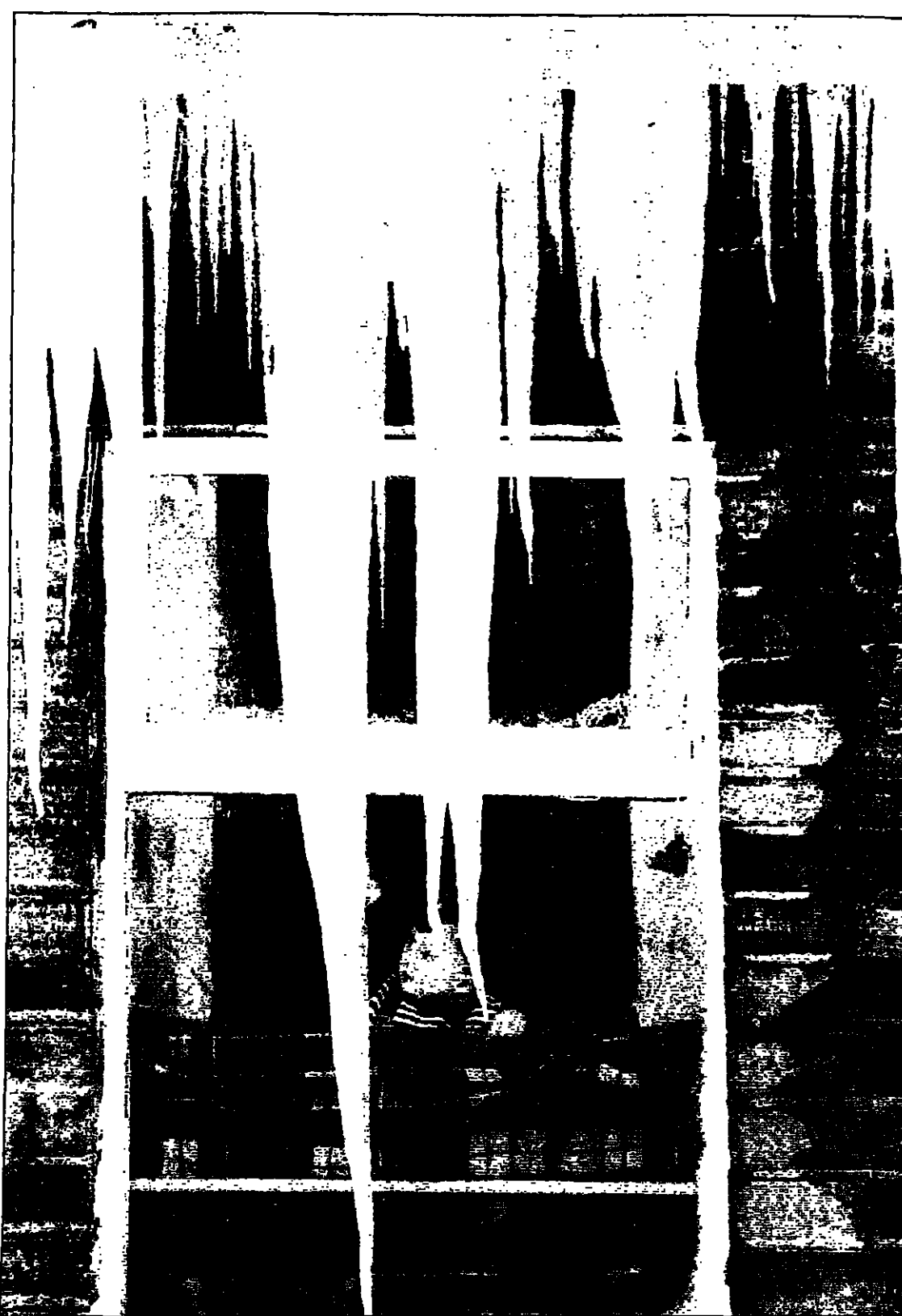
Inspection can generally be done from the ground using binoculars, checking for deterioration including loose or

slipped tiles, corroded nails, eroded mortar-bed joints on ridges, cracked or crumbling brickwork in chimneys, and insecure aerial and satellite dish fixings.

Other aspects demanding attention include boundary walls, tall trees close to the house, and clearance of debris from gutters and drain gratings.

All homes built or re-roofed since 1978 should have roofs conforming to British Standard BS5334, which requires coverings to be clipped or "fixed mechanically" (nailed to timber battens) along their most exposed parts. The BRE often finds, however, that roofers have not installed clips or that builders do not realise they are needed. Retro-fitting is virtually impossible and secure fixings must be done either at the construction stage or when a house is re-roofed.

The Building Costs Information Service says re-roofing costs at least £1,000 for the average three-bedroom semi. Storm warnings by the Met Office are now 84 per cent accurate. Last-minute safeguards include moving beds from rooms under suspect chimneys, securing ladders and other loose objects that could be blown into windows, and parking cars away from trees.



When icicles hang on the wall insurance loss adjusters look for evidence of blocked gutters

Prevention is better than a claim

Insurers, keen to minimise the likelihood of claims, are urging householders to take precautions to prevent, or at least contain, damage caused by ice and snow, storms, flooding and all the other effects of what is already proving to be a thoroughly miserable winter.

Homeowners are warned consistently that household insurance is intended to cover accidental damage. It is not a maintenance contract. The steep increase in claims during the recession means that insurance companies are now inclined to investigate all but the most minor cases, either directly or by employing loss adjusters.

Evidence of blocked gutters or badly maintained roofs may lead to reduced settlements, or even none at all. However, insurers vary in the severity with which they treat evidence of negligence. Chris McKee, underwriting and claims director of Direct Line, says that a property does not have to be in minor condition to justify a claim. "We would normally pay up unless the affected area is actually falling down," he says.

It is in policyholders' own interests, as well as those of their insurance companies, to take steps to secure the safety of their property, according to the Association of British Insurers. Falling masonry, blocked flues or electrical faults can maim, or even kill. Irreplaceable possessions may be ruined by flood or fire.

The ABI publishes several free booklets that deal with both the prevention and after-effects of damage to buildings and contents.

Watch out for Winter offers a potted checklist of measures to take before the bad weather sets in. Suggested precautions include: unblocking gutters and flues; checking gutters, roofs, chimney pots and other outside structures for signs of wear and tear at least once a year; ensuring that pipes and tanks are adequately lagged and that tanks in the roof are not insulated against warmth from below.

Householders are also advised to track down the whereabouts of the main water stop cock and check that it is easily operable, so it can be turned off immediately a leak is discovered. Electrical and gas appliances should also be checked regularly.

There is also advice on what to do if a property is to be left empty for more than a few hours. If pipes freeze or burst, if a loft fills with snow, or if the property is flooded. Other booklets include: How To Claim For Storm Damage To Your Home, and Domestic Frost Precautions.

The Association of British Insurers is at Aldermar House, 10-15 Queen Street, London EC4N 1TT. (Telephone 071-248 4477)

Still getting that sinking feeling

The wet autumn has done nothing to persuade insurers to reduce excess subsidence charges

Household insurance premiums that soared in the wake of surging subsidence claims are unlikely to shrink in the foreseeable future. Despite long periods of heavy rain throughout 1993, insurers are proving resistant to the idea that the short space of long, dry summers originally blamed for the explosion in claims was simply a short-lived blip on the meteorological charts.

Insurers say that they are still paying out about the same

amount in subsidence claims as in 1989. They add that they would be paying out very much more if the housing market were not in such a sorry state. "People normally only discover the possible existence of subsidence if a surveyor points it out," says the Association of British Insurers. Thus, the argument goes, when the housing market recovers, subsidence claims could return to their 1990/91 peak, and premiums must still reflect this.

"It would be a brave underwriter who reduced premiums on the strength of one wet summer," says Chris McKee, underwriting and claims director of Direct Line. He denies the industry was jumping the gun by imposing big premium rises on the back of just three dry summers in a country famous for its rain.

Mr McKee says that a large number of the last five years' subsidence claims were unnecessary. "Some were genuine cases. People's homes had to be demolished and I feel very sorry for them. But many were due to over-cautious surveyors' reports."

Guidelines on subsidence to be published by the Building Research Establishment at the end of the year should clear up some misunderstandings.

This week, Independent Insurance claimed to be the first insurer to abolish excesses for subsidence claims. But the effect appears to be almost completely cosmetic.

Independent has abolished excesses on subsidence claims in large areas of Scotland, North Devon, Cumbria and north and mid-Wales. With the odd exception, such as Glasgow, most of the land af-

fect supports little more than sheep and ponies. Such homes as there are built on solid rock. Claims are likely to be so infrequent that the size of the excess would appear to be irrelevant to any but those living over old mineshafts.

"It's up to the customer whether they prefer cheaper premiums, or no excess," says Kevin Pallett of Independent. In all other parts of the country, the company will continue to impose excesses of between £500 and £3,000 on subsidence claims. Direct Line charges a flat £1,000 excess irrespective of area.

Weekend Money is edited by Rose Wild

Pension firms must care more

It would be easier to have sympathy for the combined chorus of the life and pensions industry that any changes in the Budget will hurt millions of people in retirement, if that industry appeared to give any after-sales service to its customers.

Once on the books, policyholders, it seems, are forgotten, unless there is another selling opportunity. Even those who have the audacity to ask for information are often given short shrift. People nearing retirement who ask how much their fund will be worth in a few months or a year may be ignored or get an unhelpful letter stating that it is not possible to predict the final payout.

One reader who had over the years built up a range of policies wrote to the six different companies to ask what his retirement income might be. One replied promptly giving all the information available at that stage and inviting further enquiries. One did not reply at all. Three others said they could not give an estimate of the amount that would be available at his 65th birthday.

Another reader who had one self-employed pension plan received a letter days before the policy matured. This enclosed several forms asking her to select the type of pension she wanted, but no guidance was given. On offer was a level pension that would start paying out £21 a week and continue to do so for the rest of her retirement or a pension paying £14 a week initially but then increasing by 5 per cent a year.

She could take a lump sum, guarantee the payments for five or ten years, and/or have the pension continue until



COMMENT
LINDSAY COOK
Deputy Business Editor

her husband's death, should he outlive her. No one should expect salesmen to tell the customer which option to take but some help on the implications of their options would not go amiss. After all, the insurance companies work out the choices in the hope that they will pay out the same amount in the long term whichever choice is made.

Most men working till state retirement age will not know that according to the actuarial tables they are expected to live to 78 — two years longer than those who retire at 60. Women who retire at 60 tend to live two years longer and if they retire at 65 they average 82.

It might also be useful to tell people that in the past 20 years inflation has fallen below 5 per cent in only four years: 1987, 1988, 1991 and 1992.

It could then be left to the prospective pensioner to decide whether inflation has been tackled once and for all; how long, given their family history, they are likely to live; and, if their spouse is older, whether it is worth the initial reduction in pension income to safeguard his or her income in widowhood.

The caring pension providers need to

pay more attention to the well-being of their customers before we take their concern seriously and do not take it to be the boy crying wolf again in an attempt to rake in more money.

Credit crunch

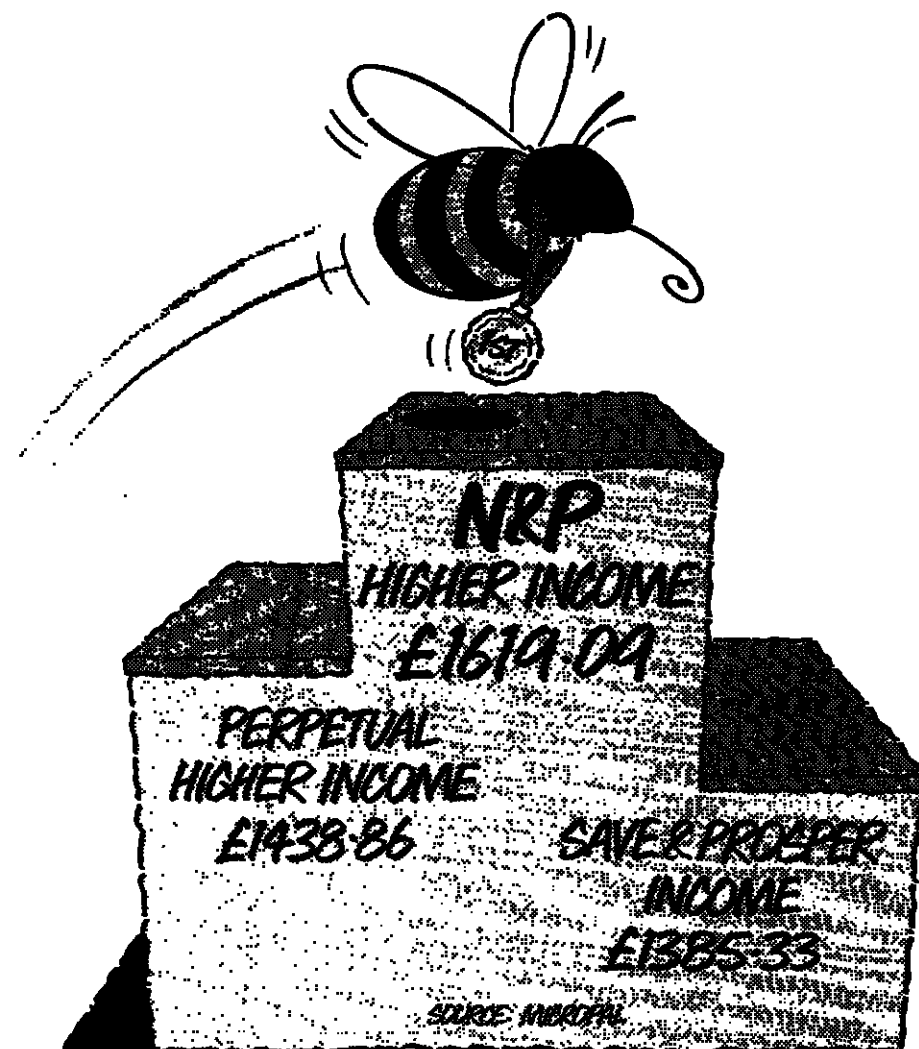
Anyone planning to fund their Christmas spending on credit needs to make sure that they have the financial standing to do so. No, this is not a moral lecture. People with impeccable financial records may find that in the eyes of credit companies their standing is low, when they apply for a loan, a store or credit card.

Problems arise when wrong information is attached to their credit reference records in error. It may be someone else's county court judgment is put in their file, or a disputed builder's bill has turned up as a bad debt.

With the details of millions of adults on computer, it is not surprising that some mistakes happen when people with similar names live in the same street.

Anyone who wants to borrow or to be sure that the records are correct can write to the leading credit reference agencies, enclosing EI, and ask for what is on record about them. If anything is wrong you have the right to get it corrected. This is not always as easy as it seems, as becomes apparent when looking at the Data Protection Registrar's annual report. Being forewarned can be helpful when discussing whether you are a financially reliable person who can be trusted with a plastic card.

ANOTHER 1ST FOR N&P PEPs

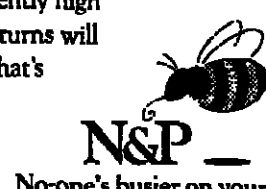


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Clubbing together to play the stock market

Share owning can be fun, says a campaign to promote investment clubs. Sara McConnell reports

Attempts by government to encourage private investors to buy and hold shares directly have met with a generally disappointing response. But there are little pockets of support for share ownership, in the shape of investment clubs. There are an estimated 600 of these clubs, where neighbours, friends and workmates pool their funds, choose shares and spread the risk.

Many have started optimistically, only to founder when the administration proved too complicated. In a bid to try and revive the movement, ProShare, the government and Stock Exchange-funded body, has taken over the National Association of Investment Clubs and launched what it describes as "the complete service for existing and potential investment clubs". This includes a detailed manual on how to set up a club, how to use a stockbroker and how to deal with the administration, including accounting and taxation.

At the same time, Barclayshare, part of Barclays Stockbrokers, is offering a cheap dealing service, monthly portfolio valuations and bank statements, and custody of

share certificates to investment clubs. Barclayshare already handles share dealing and administration for about 70 clubs. Justin Urquhart-Stewart, head of customer services at Barclays Stockbrokers, says: "Many investment clubs are moribund because people just get bored with the administration... They only

clubs, says: "We want clubs to be set up properly and safely. They are dealing with people's money."

The best way to avoid disappearance of funds through fraud is to appoint two or three club members as trustees and register investments in their names, says ProShare. Alternatively, clubs can arrange for

for the first investment. Clubs can either buy the manual alone for £25, or become full members of ProShare Investment Clubs for £50. For this, they get a monthly newsletter, a helpline and access to special offers and discounts. ProShare stresses that it will not act as an introductory service. Clubs that become members of the ProShare Investment Club do not get Barclayshare's Investment Service.

Barclayshare is offering a separate but complementary service, says ProShare, although ProShare members using Barclayshare get their first purchase of shares free if they buy before January 1994. They can also register up to ten stocks free of charge.

Those who do not want professional advice can opt for Barclayshare's portfolio management service, which costs £1 per stock per quarter (minimum £12). Barclayshare's advisory service, which gives advice on stocks, costs £1.25 per stock per quarter (minimum £30). Telephone dealing costs £20.

Information is available on ProShare Investment Clubs on freephone 0800 556622. Barclayshare Investment Club Service details are on freephone 0800 551177.

Many clubs have foundered when administration proved too complex

need a monthly bank statement, a portfolio valuation so they can see how much surplus cash they've got, then they can just tell us what they want to buy or sell."

Another problem many clubs face is high dealing charges. Even clubs with £30,000 or £40,000 invested are considered small by many private client stockbrokers.

Tony Drury, managing director of ProShare Investment

their shares to be held in the name of a nominee company.

The ProShare manual explains these and other legal and tax matters in more detail. It also explains how clubs can work out each person's share, which is particularly important if people want to withdraw. It suggests that there should be a maximum of 20 members with a minimum of three and that members should raise about £500 each



Members of the Runcion Investment Club have "endless discussions" over the rules of their share selection system

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Past performance is not a guide to the future. On with-profits contracts, final value will depend upon future bonuses which are not guaranteed. Amounts being paid now reflect the high interest rates and investment returns of the last ten years. On unit-linked plans the value of units may go down as well as up. Full written details are available on request. Legal & General is a member of LAUTRO.

Stocks, whisky and absolutely no women

THE 12 members of the Runcion Investment Club near Chichester have an unwritten rule that the only drink on offer at their monthly meetings is Scotch whisky. They take seriously the idea that investment clubs are meant to be fun (Sara McConnell writes).

Most fun is had arguing over club rules. Four years after the club was formed, the members are still not agreed that their system of stock picking is ideal. "We have endless discussions," says Brian Senior, the club secretary.

Every month, each member gives a presentation on a certain stock, then the members vote on which to buy or opt for cash. Each has six votes, and can use them all towards one stock or opt for a mixture.

Good presentation sways people just as much as facts and there is very little that is scientific about the group's stock research.

The portfolios are capped at £15,000, at which point shares are sold off and those who want to hold onto them can "buy in" on their own account, without having to pay dealing charges.

The rules worry the members far more than dealing with the administration and tax matters their activities generate.

Apart from Mr Senior himself, who is a chartered surveyor and estate agent, the club's membership, all male,

includes three other chartered accountants, an architect and a market gardener. All take turns to chair meetings at their homes.

Each member invests £60-a-month, giving them a total of £720 to buy shares. Then there is any money left over from selling shares. The club buys shares in £700 tranches, meaning that it can normally buy one stock a month. The portfolio is making a slight profit. But investment clubs do not make their members rich. Mr Senior said: "Investment clubs... are for an exchange of views." And, just like the professionals, they make mistakes. "Then we have massive recriminations," said Mr Senior.

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'Tis the season to be insured

Christmas is a time when thieves prosper and presents are lost or broken, Jill Insley writes

In suitably festive spirit, some insurers automatically increase the sum assured on household policies during December to cover the cost of additional items in the home. Eagle Star policies sold on the basis of the sum assured increase by 10 per cent, while policies calculated on the number of bedrooms increase cover by £3,500. The facility adds between £1 and £5 to the cost of a policy.

Graham Johnstone, personal property and accident manager for Eagle Star, says the company received 20 per cent more claims in the winter months last year than in the summer. He says: "The cover of darkness does help and at Christmas people go away and leave their houses empty, providing richer pickings for thieves."

The headline "Heartless thieves stole Christmas presents" is an annual favourite for local newspapers, and many tears will also be spilt over toys broken a few hours after they were opened. Luckily, most goods stolen or broken within the home will be covered by household insurance.

Sun Alliance maintains the sum assured throughout the year, on the basis that homeowners often overestimate the value of their household con-

tents. Jeff Kehoe, the firm's household underwriting manager, says normal cover is usually more than enough to cover the additional cost of Christmas presents. Any extra cover would put up costs.

"I have a small Christmas tree with very few presents underneath it. If someone tried to force feed me with £1,000 of extra cover, I wouldn't want it," he said.

About a third of the credit cards issued, including those from the Bank of Scotland, Girobank, Halifax and National & Provincial, provide insurance for purchases. Credit card companies will not usually pay out, though, if goods are covered by other insurance.

People leave their houses empty, providing richer pickings for thieves

Barclaycard covers goods costing between £50 and £1,500 for accidental damage or loss within 100 days of purchase.

Christmas presents stolen from cars may be covered by the motor policy, but policyholders should bear in mind that claims may be nullified by the "excess", the amount they contribute towards the claim.

Even if a motor policy does pay out on goods stolen from a car, cover may be limited. Churchill Insurance allows claims of up to £50, although policyholders can buy additional personal effects insurance which will pay up to £1,500.

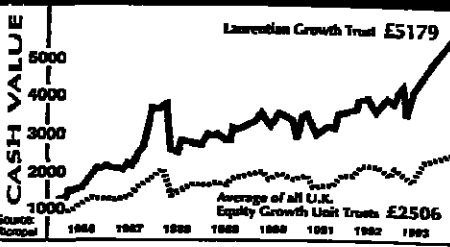


Most stolen or broken presents should be covered but December premiums may rise

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PEP 3

Bankrupt by any other name

Recently I had to declare I was not a bankrupt. To be specific, that I was not the Milner (male) unknown who had been subject to formal bankruptcy proceedings at Birmingham Crown Court on August 20 last year. It was an unexpected and rather embarrassing turn of events.

In fact the aforesaid male Milner, whose first name and initials were unknown to Birmingham Crown Court, was unknown to me as well. As far as I knew, we were not even distantly related. And it was because he was unknown that he was included in the land charges search on a property I was selling.

Every year numerous home sellers find themselves in this position. It stems from a routine procedure which has been in operation for 19 years and which makes homes sales more complex, more costly and more chancy.

Everyone knows that solicitors acting for prospective home buyers search Land

Richard Milner was embarrassed to have to convince his vendor's solicitor that he was not a bankrupt

Registry records to find who has the title to the property and if a mortgage is attached. Few are aware that they also check land charges in Plymouth.

This department keeps records of second mortgages, agreements to buy and restrictive covenants. But its main function is to stop people buying from bankrupts who would not be entitled to sell, since it is illegal for them to own a house.

"Bankruptcy entries are registered against the bankrupt's name as given by the Court of the Official Receiver," says the department's

supervisor, Tracy Shaddock. "Entries are not registered against land and the details on the certificate do not imply the entry has been made against your property."

Sometimes a bankrupt owns properties in addition to the one in which he actually lives. Mrs Shaddock points out, "Therefore it is important that our index is one of names only and that any entries registered against a person with the same or similar name are revealed by a search."

If the Court does not list the bankrupt's first name or initials, that incomplete entry will automatically be included in each and every certificated computer search of vendors with the same surname.

Since land charges do not know whether its bankrupts match up with its vendors, the buyer's solicitor has to make up his own mind.

"I didn't think it was you," said our man. And the sale went through.

THE A-Z of WARRANTS

Warrants Alert, The Sion, Nailsea, Bristol, BS19 2EP. Tel: 0275-855558 - The McHattie Group

A is for Abtrust New Dawn 'B' warrants, which we advised subscribers to buy at 8p last October. The current price is 95p - an astonishing rise of 1,088%. This provides a dramatic demonstration of the 'gearing' effect of warrants which can provide such large profits. After all, Abtrust New Dawn shares rose by only 127% over the same period.

B is for BTR, one of the large 'blue-chip' companies which supports the UK warrants market. These warrants are easy to trade and to follow.

C is for Capital Gains, something for which warrants are ideally suited. Warrants have the potential for much larger gains than shares, and in rising markets they produce some astonishing profits - IF you have the right information.

D is for Discount, our special offer to new subscribers. Over the next year we will demonstrate the tremendous opportunities which warrants can provide, after which we are sure you will be pleased to join our growing list of regular subscribers. In the meantime you can subscribe for a year at our 1993 price of just £49.95 - a discount of £40! This offer closes on 31st December.

E is for Editor. Andrew McHattie has edited Warrants Alert since 1989 and is well known as the UK's leading independent warrants analyst. He is the author of the best-selling Pitman/Financial Times book, *The Investor's Guide to Warrants*.



F is for Fleming Chinese Investment Trust, one of a number of recent investment trust issues with warrants attached. Warrants Alert covers all new issues and will advise you whether to buy more warrants, hold your entitlement, or sell them in the market.

G is for Gartmore Emerging Pacific, whose warrants we recommended in January at 17p, then again in February at 21p (mid-prices). The current price is 70.5p.

H is for Hanson, whose warrants carry the right to subscribe for one share at 300p at any time until 30th September 1997. The Warrants Directory, which is sent free to all new subscribers, lists the full subscription terms for all UK warrants.

I is for Introductory Guide. Don't worry if you haven't invested in warrants before - every subscriber receives a free copy of our essential introductory booklet. This will provide you with concise explanations of what warrants are, where they come from, how they are evaluated, and what all the jargon means.

N is for Newsletter. Subscribers receive the Warrants Alert newsletter promptly on the first Saturday of every month. This keeps you right up to date with all market news, telling you which warrants to buy (and why), which to avoid, and when to take your profits.

O is for Oriental Smaller Companies warrants, which you could have bought for 30p on their first day of dealings in April. The current price is 99p.

P is for Paribas French Investment Trust 'B' warrants, which we recommended at 8p in January. The current price is 33p.

Q is for Query. How do I deal in warrants? The answer is that you deal in exactly the same way as ordinary shares, with the same dealing charges. You can deal through your existing broker, or we can provide one for you.

R is for Risk. Warrants do carry a higher risk than ordinary shares, and we would not advise anyone to venture into the warrants market without the benefit of specialist advice. You must be properly informed before dealing.

S is for Stock Exchange. All of the warrants we cover are fully listed on the Stock Exchange just like ordinary shares. There are over 195 warrants traded, forming one of the most exciting speculative markets in the UK.

T is for Track Record. We are proud of our advice and the performance of our 'tips'. Our average gain from ALL recommendations over the last twelve months is 94.20%. This covers a total of 26 recommendations, 25 of which have risen, and one of which has fallen (by 4.1%).

U is for Unique. Warrants Alert is the only publication dedicated to UK equity warrants, and has been published since 1989. There is no other source which can provide the private investor with such expert information and advice.

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Z is for Zero, the amount you pay for the FREE publications we send to all new subscribers. When you subscribe you will receive our booklet *An Introductory Guide to Warrants*; our reference guide *The Warrants Directory*; plus fortnightly updates to supplement your newsletter.

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Warning: The prices of warrants can be volatile. You should not buy warrants with money you cannot afford to lose.

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Health check for fraudsters

Computers and inspectors are to be used to track down false claims, Jill Insley writes

Insurance policy holders who have been making false claims will need to be on the lookout. This week the Association of British Insurers launched a nationwide system of computer registers in which the main insurers will record details of all individual claims over the past three years.

By referring to the database, insurers expect to be able to identify potential frauds and thereby keep down the cost, estimated at £400 million per year, of paying out on false claims. Initially the register will cover home insurance, with motor and holiday insurance to follow.

The Health Claims Bureau, a new firm of specialist loss adjusters, is to provide an independent inspection service to check the validity of claims on permanent health insurance, total and permanent disability policies and requests to waive premiums. Until now insurance companies have checked out dubious health claims by correspondence or have relied on counsellors whose role should be provided

ing advice and rehabilitation help to claimants.

The bureau has been established by James Harris and Peter Smith, of the detective agency James Harris Investigations, to assess, with the claimant's co-operation, whether the claim is valid. JHI acts as investigator for insurance companies.

Mr Smith says that just because HCB has been called in, claimants should not assume their benefits will be cut off. He says that many claims problems arise from poor communication between the claimants and the insurance company. "This is where HCB can help." Although HCB inspectors will make an appointment to visit the claimant on the first occasion, subsequent visits may be unannounced, unless the claimant suffers from "a persecution complex or acute depression".

HCB, which has three active inspectors and eight in training, has tested its service on 17 cases so far. Of these, Mr Smith says one claimant was clearly fraudulent and two others were not entitled to



James Harris says his agency and the Health Claims Bureau will not share work

receive benefit. The remainder continue to receive payment.

The bureau, which is financially backed by New York Life, America's third biggest life insurer, and Munich RE, the world's biggest re-insurance company, will not carry out any covert investigative work. Mr Harris says there will be no work shared by HCB and JHI.

Abbey Life employs its own claims negotiators. Martin Jones, its business development manager, said negotiators had two roles. They can check the validity of claims, thus preventing fraudulent claims adding to the cost of insurance premiums. They can also advise claimants on social security benefit and the extent of cover provided by

their insurance contract. He cites the example of a claimant who does not want to return to work because he would have to take a lower paid position until fully rehabilitated. Mr Jones says: "We will pay a reduced benefit to make up the difference if they go back in lower paid work. This is the kind of benefit a claimant may not realise exists."

Actuaries take pick of personal pension plans

A survey of nil-commission pension plans advises investors how they might jump ship

Sun Life, National Mutual Life and Standard Life are named as best unit-linked personal pension providers in a survey by Bacon & Woodrow consultants and actuaries (Jill Insley writes). People who have policies with Rothschild Asset Management and Scottish Widows should also continue with them, the actuaries say. No other unit-linked personal pension provider receives any recommendation from B&W.

Richard Chapman, a partner in B&W, says that anyone with an unrecommended single or regular premium unit-linked policy on nil-commission terms should ask for a transfer value to see whether it is worth switching to a recommended provider's policy. "There probably wouldn't be a horrendous penalty on switching, so we would recommend that they move to one of the short-listed providers."

Those paying regular premiums who would be lost out by a transfer should continue payments, but not increase them. Likewise, conventional with-profits policies should generally not be disturbed, while with-profits units in "hybrid" policies should be switched to equity-based, cash or fixed interest funds.

Investors paying commission to advisers who set up their pension contracts will probably incur hefty penalties if they switch to another company's policy. Mr Chapman suggests that they seek independent advice on whether to switch, to keep paying or to make the policy "paid up" by stopping payments.

B&W again recommends steering clear of with-profits personal pensions in favour of unit-linked plans. With-profits plans rely on actuarial discretion, whereas unit-linked plans only reflect the value of underlying assets.

B&W's Andrew Warwick-Thompson says that the fixed interest and property elements of with-profits funds are likely to hinder performance. "Investing in well-managed, equity-based, unit-linked funds, which may take strategic holdings in property and fixed interest when investment conditions suggest that this is appropriate, is likely in the long term to produce returns superior to those of most with-profits funds," he says.

B&W favours the charging transparency of unit-linked policies and their greater flexibility.

Mr Chapman says: "We will continue to monitor the with-

profits industry carefully, but we will not generally recommend new with-profits policies to our private clients during 1993-4 at least."

Insurers that offer with-profits contracts are dismayed by B&W's stance. John Bowman, of Commercial Union, says: "I am very disappointed that they have repeated that claim. With-profits is a very good investment for those who want stability and long-term returns."

B&W's recommendations are based on nil-commission terms that it has from insurers. Its findings are not relevant to investors who arrange policies through financial advisers who take commission.

For those closer to retirement and investing single

premiums, Bacon found Standard Life to be the best company, with National Mutual second. For younger investors, the top two positions were reversed.

Standard Life is declared best for regular premium pensions for people within five years of retirement.

For longer periods to retirement, National Mutual and Sun Life are preferred. Bacon & Woodrow's choice was made after analysis of policy charges. Most of the 193 companies were ruled out after a review of investment performance and volatility. Twelve of the remaining 23 were ruled out for reasons including lack of nil-commission terms and having managed funds of less than £20 million.

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There is little sign yet of any sustained recovery in the housing market, the Building Societies Association says. BSA figures for October show that gross mortgage lending fell slightly to £2.6 billion. On the other side of the coin, savings received a temporary shot in the arm as investors started their traditional pre-Christmas build-up of funds. A net £258 million flowed into building society coffers in October, more than twice the £124 million taken in September.

Investor confidence has slipped to its lowest point since March of this year. Pearl Assurance's monthly investor confidence index has slipped by five points, from 91.7 to 86.7, over the past month. The greatest decline was among women, whose confidence fell by 5.5 per cent to 20.5 per cent, the lowest for a year. Confidence among company directors fell for the third consecutive month, once again to its lowest level since November 1992. This follows a slow, but steady, increase in

confidence in the summer and may be the result of pre-Budget nerves, says Pearl.

A four-year mortgage at 7.25 per cent is the latest addition to Alliance & Leicester's fixed-rate range. Other rates are fixed at between 5.45 per cent and 7.7 per cent for one to five years. All are available on repayment, endowment and pension-linked mortgages. The arrangement fee is 0.5 per cent of the loan up to a £300 maximum, and borrowers must take out household insurance through the society.

Windsor Life has a single-premium, with-profits, whole-of-life insurance bond with a guaranteed 7.5 per cent interest rate, free of basic rate tax, until April 30 next year. Minimum investment is £5,000; there is no maximum. Surrender penalties apply for the first five years.

A guide to tax-free savings has been published by Home-owners Friendly Society. The booklet discusses how and

when savings are taxed, vehicles for short-, medium- and long-term savings, and various tax-free options, including National Savings, friendly societies, Peps and Tesses. It is free on 0800 373010.

National & Provincial Building Society has installed instant photo booths in 100 of its 320 branches to encourage credit card customers to convert to its Visa photocard. One in three of its cardholders has converted, and more than 90 per cent of new applicants opt for photocards, says N&P. "But we suspect a lot more would swap over if it weren't for the hassle of finding a photo." The booths charge £2 for four shots.

Pearl Assurance has set up a two-part project for children to stir their interest in the Budget. The first part is a series of fact sheets for study in the run-up to Budget day. The second part will be produced overnight after the Chancellor's speech for dispatch to 5,400 schools on December 1. Details: 0733 470470.

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GROSS %	4.35%	4.60%	5.75%
NET CAR %	3.31%	3.51%	4.40%
NET %	3.26%	3.45%	4.31%

Full terms and conditions are available on request. GROSS - applied once per interest payable, when income can be used to reduce the debt. NET - applied rate of interest payable after allowing for the deduction of income tax at the basic rate. Non-residents may claim interest tax deducted. CAR - (Credit Annual Rate) - this is the Gross or Net rate adjusted to take account of interest applied during the year remaining in the account and well earning interest. Rates subject to variation but remain at time of going to press. * On balances of £250,000 and above.

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4.31% Net, 5.90% Gross CAR

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Name T 28/11

Address

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*The prices of units and the income from them can go down as well as up. Some securities may not be designated in sterling, and so may rise or fall purely on account of exchange rate fluctuations. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future returns. Estimated gross yield based on an offer price of 55.33p on 15.10.93. Paid net of lower rate income tax each month equivalent to 6.48% pa.

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مكتبة من الأصل



A happy and active retirement with a good pension may require clever steps in fund-switching while still at work

Fancy footwork cuts risks in run-up to retirement

Recent falls in the stock market must have sent shivers down the spines of many people approaching retirement who are relying on their own pension plans to provide a retirement income.

Those with unit-linked pension plans are particularly vulnerable. A fall in the stock market can reduce the value of their investments dramatically overnight and, with it, the amount of pension that they can buy. It is possible to minimise the danger of loss by switching policies into less risky investments as retirement gets closer. However, only a handful of companies offer to do this automatically.

Most insurers agree that it makes good sense to switch pensions out of funds heavily invested in shares into more stable cash or gilt funds in the year before retirement, but they generally leave the policyholder to take the initiative.

The problem with this is that people forget, said Ian Ford, marketing manager of Scottish Life, which introduced a pension plan last year with automatic switching. He added: "In practice, switching facilities are rarely used. People tend to invest in whatever pension fund looks suitable at the time and just leave their money where it is."

However, Stewart Richie, director in charge of pensions

Pension savers often forget to adjust schemes. Some plans do it for you. Helen Pridham reports

development at Scottish Equitable, said: "Leaving your money in a fund with high exposure to the stock market is like playing Russian roulette with your pension, as those unfortunate enough to have had policies maturing just after the stockmarket crash in 1987 found out. Some saw between 25 and 30 per cent knocked off the value of their pension overnight."

From next spring, Scottish Equitable will also offer pen-

"We felt that there was a need for a half-way house between a company final salary scheme, where an employer takes all the investment risk, and a personal pension or money purchase scheme, where the risk is borne entirely by the policyholder. With our Life-Plan, we manage the risk, adjusting the mix of investments as someone progresses through his or her working life."

"The closer to retirement

25 per cent in cash. All the switches are made free of charge.

Scottish Life offers a similar scheme. With its Retirement Investment Strategy pension policy, policyholders who are 20 years or more away from retirement are placed 100 per cent in a UK equity fund; at 15 years, exposure to equities is lowered to 60 per cent and, over the last five years, regular switches are made so that, as with Gartmore, the policyholder ends up with 75 per cent gilt and 25 per cent cash.

With the Gartmore and Scottish Life pension schemes, which are open to regular or lump sum contributions, the switching is automatic. At Family Assurance, which offers a Retirement Countdown Bond for those who want to top up their pension within ten years of retirement, policyholders can override the phased switching programme if they wish to do so. Under this scheme, switching normally takes place in three steps from a fund that is 40 per cent UK Equity "tracker" and 60 per cent fixed interest and cash to one that is 100 per cent cash deposits.

One snag when switching into lower risk funds is that you can miss out on an increase in share prices just before you retire. Mr Attenborough said: "Getting the timing right is always going to be difficult, but we believe that it is better to be out of equities than risk the market plunging at the last moment."

Early retirement might be another problem. Mr Attenborough said: "If someone decides to bring forward their retirement and lets us know, we can adjust the switching programme. But clearly this may not always be possible."

someone gets, the more protection from short-term market volatility is provided by investment in bonds and cash deposits."

Under Gartmore's scheme, policyholders with more than 25 years to go to retirement have their contributions placed in a fund that is invested 90 per cent in shares and 10 per cent in fixed interest securities.

At 25 years, 15 years and ten years before retirement, existing investments are switched in 10 per cent tranches and future contributions redirected to bring the equity exposure down to 60 per cent. Over the last five years, the remaining equity content is reduced in stages until, by the time policyholders reach retirement, their pension is invested 75 per cent in fixed interest securities and

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*Source: Ibs Survey by Government Actuary Occupational Pension Schemes 1987.
**Source: Pensions A-Z/Financial Adviser.

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• Commission scale: Top 100 Shares - minimum £10, up to £2000 1%, next £3000 0.8%, next £5000 0.5%, remainder 0.25%. Shares Outside Top 100 - minimum £12.50, up to £2000 1.25%, over £2000 as above.
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• Customers' orders may be aggregated with those of other customers. On some occasions this may be to the customer's advantage, on others to his/her disadvantage. Deals will be carried out 3 times per day.
• This is an execution only service and no advice is given. If you are in any doubt about what action to take please contact your financial adviser.

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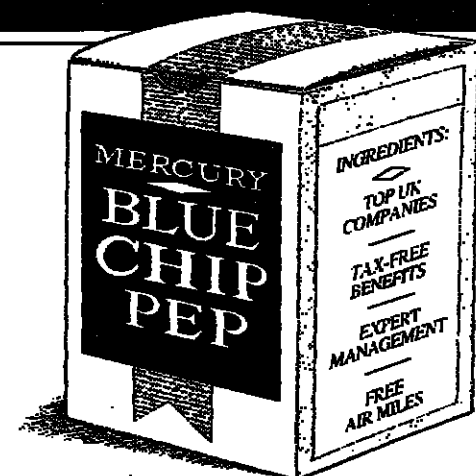
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هكذا من الأصل

RATES ROUNDUP

Due Accounts

High Low Company Price % Net Yld % P/E

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

BREWERS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

BUILDING, ROADS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

BUSINESS SERVICES

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

ELECTRICITY

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

FINANCE, LAND

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

Prices volatile in thin trading

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began November 15. Dealings end November 26. Contango day November 26. Settlement day December 6. Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days. Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's price, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

DRAPERY, STORES

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

FOODS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

INSURANCE

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

HOTELS, CATERERS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

INDUSTRIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

LONGS (over 15 years)

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

SHORTS (under 5 years)

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

BRITISH FUNDS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

PAPER, PRINT, ADVTG

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

LEISURE

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

PROPERTY

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

MINING

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

MOTORS, AIRCRAFT

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

SHOES, LEATHER

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

TEXTILES

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

NEWS, PUBLISHERS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

TOBACCOS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

TRANSPORT

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

OILS, GAS

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0

WATER

High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	100	0	10.0	10.0	10.0
100	100	Bank of America	10				

OILS, GAS							
37	17	Arco Energy	24	-	4	...	26.8
37	44	Arco Int'l	36	-	1
81	81	Atlantic Richfield	81	0	0
26	26	Activ Petroleum	72
26	26	Activ Petroleum	72
222	145	Borealis	218
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THE TIMES TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

True genius
dogged by
the flaws of
his virtue

True genius
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Batsman who paid the price for one of sport's greatest fallacies

True genius dogged by the flaws of his virtues

Simon Barnes argues that players who are touched with greatness have to be accepted for their failings as well as their strengths

I DON'T think many people got the hang of David Gower. I rather suspect David Gower is among them. Some caricatured him as the last great amateur; a throwback, the last hurrah of a dying breed. I always found that one rather over-the-top.

But the truly fatuous view has been best demonstrated by Alec Bedser, the former chairman of selectors. His verdict on Gower's career: "He disappointed a few people in not carrying on during certain innings. He should have applied himself more."

This proves, more than anything else, that there is a very considerable difference between playing a game well and understanding it. Gower was a great, if flawed player—like all other great players.

That is true whether the people in question are wives, husbands, parents, children, friends or international athletes. You can't arrange them or change them to suit yourself.

Sadler thinks Gower should have applied himself more. Application is a virtue but not an absolute one. Application, like all other sporting virtues, has its equal and opposite side. No one could apply himself more than Robin Smith.

We all saw him applying himself against Shane Warne last summer: he thought himself into a thousand blind alleys with every delivery he faced. Application! You wanted to shout at him: "Loosen up! Relax! Have a go yer mug!" But no, Smith kept on applying himself and paid the

'Let us call him a genius. I don't want to confuse Gower with Leonardo da Vinci: only with Best, McEnroe, and Campese'

And like all other great players, his flaws were *exactly* the same as his virtues.

Boycott's strengths were tenacity, single-mindedness and incredibly high valuation of his own wicket. Boycott's weaknesses were stubbornness, self-obsession and overvaluation of his own wicket.

Gower's strengths were a sublime confidence in his own hand-eye coordination, an ability to take the attack to the bowler no matter what the state of the game, and an ability to do the impossible.

Gower's weaknesses were unweariness of his own limitations, a knack of getting out to attacking shots when the game seemed to require defence and a tendency to try the impossible and get out.

You get people all of a piece, not as a packet of Lego bricks.

What would Gower have made of Warne? A century? No? A cameo? Any? Or all is possible, but alas, we shall never know.

Let us call him a genius, for convenience if nothing else. I don't wish to confuse Gower with Leonardo da Vinci or James Joyce: only with George Best, John McEnroe, Ayrtton Senna, David Campese, and Lester Piggott. We know what we mean — people who re-invent the game as they play it.

Gower has paid the price for one of the great fallacies of sport. This is the belief that a genius could be even better if he put his mind to it. The very essence of Gower's game was that he was virtually incapable of putting his mind to it. Overmuch thinking undid his games. Thought blocked the conduits through which his genius flowed.

With Gower, as with every other person on that list, another sigh, and say that if only a genius had the same virtues, the same nature as people with mere talent, he would be able to fulfill his promise.

People imagine that if Gower played with the tenacity of Ray, Ken Barrington, he would have been a different player. That is quite true, of



Gower in full flow, his flaws were *exactly* the same as his virtues

course. He would have been Ken Barrington. But Gower was doomed to play with the tenacity of David Gower. Gower could not, by his nature, be even better than he was. The point is that *he has* fulfilled his promise.

It is odd the way people always expect a genius to snap out of it, to make himself a more determined player by an act of the will. No one ever says, "One of the great of the mill played: 'For God's sake, snap out of it and be a genius!'"

No one told Alec Stewart to be more like David Gower. Why did they want Gower to be like Alec Stewart? In any case, both are equally impos-

able. People asked why Glen and Freddie didn't tackle back-mucks; no one ever asked the tackle-backers why they didn't float 40-yard passes.

This sport prefers to emphasise the tantrums of McEnroe, the mania of Senna, the waywardness of Best, the avarice of Piggott, the dangers of Campese and Gower.

And it is true that if you are going to stand up for genius, then you must accept the fact that the genius himself is never going to help you out.

A dramatic Gower come-back last summer would have been as likely to have involved some footing waft

outside off stump to Paul Huffer as a glorious demolition of Warne. Gower, prone to self-caricature in every aspect of his life, has fallen to as many great occasions as he has risen.

But the old firm of Stewart, Gooch and Stewart could find no place for him. His flair infuriated them, his failings irritated the hell out of them.

The failure to take on Gower was the ultimate failure of Gooch's brave period as captain. Gooch has never really understood that cricket is a game for all sorts and conditions of men. Thus Englund lost the ability to stand.

Game's rulers courting wrong arm of the law



**ALAN
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Cricket C

Cricket Commentary

At the time it was made, the decision by the International Cricket Council (ICC) to award the next World Cup to the sub-continent seemed perverse and prejudicial. The events of the past fortnight have offered nothing in the way of reassurance, either that the game's ruling body acted advisably or that its flagship competition will proceed smoothly in two years' time. All concerned have been in the dock, figuratively and almost literally.

In India, another of the gratuitous one-day events which annually masquerade as World Cup substitutes has been running into the sort of problems which, were they not so common, could immeasurably harm the stature of the real thing.

A crowd in Ahmedabad, numbering 50,000 and apparently incited purely by the impending defeat of their team against West Indies, tried to halt a game through violent disorder and, for some time, succeeded. This came after the television coverage of the event had suffered a sabotage attempt by the local Indian network, which was resolved only by resorting to the comets.

Meanwhile, Pakistan, who are to share the majority of the World Cup matches, have no reason to feel smug for being absent. They have snubbed the Indian tournament, the latest act in the political posturing between the countries which leads outsiders to fear for their level of co-operation when it matters.

Pakistan, too, have this week been impugned in court — the High Court in London, where the libel action ostensibly involving Allan Lamb, Sarfraz Nawaz and things which might or might not have been said many years ago, in fact

focused more damagingly on the question of whether the 1992 Pakistan touring team in England indulged in ball tampering.

Pakistan's standing in the fair-play league was dealt another blow by the umpire, Don Oslcar, confirming what many people already knew or suspected to be the real reason the ball was changed during the controversial one-day international at Lord's.

That it had not been made public before is a matter for the conscience of the ICC. Its appointed officers chose to remain silent, inviting the worst and most prolonged form of speculation which eventually led to the High Court. It was a silence which spoke of fear and weakness, provoked by the belief that Pakistan would either take legal action or abort the tour, maybe both, if the truth was told.

Similar apprehensions preceded the decision to allow India and Pakistan to stage the World Cup for the second time in three tournaments. It was, to some degree, brought about by South Africa's refusal to accept England's assumed right to the honour and, to some degree, by the ICC's archaic and manipulated voting procedures. But it should not have happened and the consequences of the decision could yet be dire.

It needs emphasising that, in 1987, India and Pakistan combined with a sickness which confounded the many doubters and astonished those who had been privy to tours of the subcontinent on which the most essential

virtue was inexhaustible patience. Arguably, they did the job with more efficiency than the combination of Australia and New Zealand five years later. There are experienced, illustrious players who believe the 1987 tournament to have been the best run of any.

Maybe nothing has changed. Maybe the same people can come up with a similarly agreeable formula. But plenty of people in high places are doubting it with increasing concern, heightened by what seem from the outside to be a series of childish reasons why Pakistan and India refuse to play each other.

On Monday, the new-look leadership of the ICC takes a look for itself. David Richards, installed at Lord's as chief executive, is to fly to India with Clyde Walcott, who has recently succeeded Sir Colin Cowdrey as chairman.

It is hard to observe the closing stages of the Indian tournament and have discussions relating, among other things, to the staging of the World Cup. Their findings may be important and it is to be hoped, for their own and the game's credibility, that they will not be shy about expressing them.

The image of cricket has sustained some needless damage in recent days. Much of it could have been avoided by firmer leadership when circumstances demanded that tough decisions be taken and broadcast. Richards and Walcott may find themselves in just such a position next week.

Lamb accuses, page 3

Snell undermines Sri Lanka

SOUTH Africa recorded a bounding 78-run victory over Sri Lanka at Gwalahati in the Cricket Association of Bengal diamond jubilee one day tournament yesterday.

South Africa struggled to reach 214 for seven against Sri Lanka's four-pronged spin attack but the strength of their own bowling ensured that it was more than enough.

Kepler Wessels laid the foundations for South Africa's total with an elaborate 53 from 91 balls but it was Daryll Cullinan who provided the only real impetus with two sixes and a four in a 41 from just 56 balls.

Sri Lanka subsided from

SOUTH AFRICA

K.C. Wessels at Kaluthamane	53
B. Murithanah 28	
C. C. Chetty at Kuluwini	53
P. Maruthiah	53
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GUIDE TO THE WEEK-END STUDIE

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Watson finishes strongly to hold off Lane

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES
IN MIYAZAKI, JAPAN

BARRY Lane, of Britain, winner of the European Masters in Switzerland earlier this year, is in with a great chance of adding the Japanese version, the Dunlop Phoenix tournament, to his collection after a second round of 68 here yesterday.

Lane is on 135, nine under par and one shot behind Tom Watson, who maintained his narrow lead with a finish that recalled the days when he was a regular winner of major championships.

Unhappy with the slow play and a capricious breeze that affected his rhythm, the US Ryder Cup captain had a particularly sloppy bogey at the 14th but conjured an eagle and a birdie from the last three holes.

He had no more than a nine-iron for his second shot at the 14th but he pulled it into a greenside bunker. "It was a stupid mistake," he said, "and it made me pretty upset. But it changed my thinking and gave me some momentum."

At the 16th, a par four of 402 yards, Watson landed his sand-wedge approach ten feet short of the hole and the ball rolled in for a two. He secured his par three at the 17th, a testing hole of 187 yards, with a pond guarding the left-hand side of the green, and despite a wayward two-iron second at the 18th, hopped his third over the trees and holed the resultant 12-footer for his birdie four.

Lane has not looked back since he topped several inches off his putter, reducing the shaft to a Japanese-sized 31 inches, when he was putting badly over here two years ago. He keeps his arms straight and maintains a pendulum-like stroke, with no breaking of the wrists.

Yesterday he had six birdies and his only real disappointment was taking three putts from eight feet for a par at the 10th, after a superbly struck one-iron from 228 yards had set up a birdie opportunity.

Lane has a bet on the outcome with Isao Aoki, the Japanese veteran who won \$500,000 on the US Senior Tour this year and did not drop a shot in a typically composed 67. "Whoever finishes higher wins 10,000 yen [about £63]," Lane said.

Sandy Lyle and Severiano Ballesteros qualified safely on 145 but Ian Woosnam, who added a 76 to his first-round 74, was able to leave early for home. He spent too much time in the black pines that line the fairways.

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Eubank bobs, ducks and weaves at Cambridge Union



Eubank: quick talking

WASNT there once a golden age when boxers used to say "I'll let my fists do the talking for me?" Even Muhammad Ali will probably be remembered best for doggerel along the lines of "Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee". Now boxers are queuing up to give lectures. Boxing has become a pretext for philosophising.

Last week at the Cambridge Union, it was the Chancellor on the economy; next week, it is Ted Heath on Europe; on Thursday night, it was Chris Eubank versus a packed debating chamber of undergraduates and a phalanx of photographers.

The World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight champion must have been nervous because he had brought some extra muscle along with him. Not a bodyguard, though, more of a mindguard in the shape of Shaa Wasgund, a student of international relations at

the London School of Economics, who moonlights as Eubank's image-protector.

Wasgund had written a few notes for him. Eubank took a look at the prepared speech but could not seem to make much out of it and handed it instead to someone in the front row. "Here, you read it," he said.

He went for the direct approach. "Is there anyone here who dislikes me?" he asked. No takers. But there were some hostile questions, notably touching on Michael Watson and Nigel Benn. "After the Nigel Benn fight," Eubank parried, "about 15 per cent of people said to me you should have won, another 15 per cent said 'he should have won'. But 60 per cent reckon it was right that it was a draw."

"Hey, Chris," one sharp young Cambridge intellectual riposted. "What did the other ten per cent think?"

Andy Martin watches a world boxing champion take the floor for some vigorous verbal sparring

"I'm no mathematician," Eubank grinned.

Not only is it difficult to intimidate Eubank, it is impossible to embarrass him. Anyone with the face to strut about in rose-pink jodhpurs, knee-high riding boots and a canary yellow waistcoat, with a monochrome dangle from his neck, is immune to embarrassment. He even admitted he practised his don't-mess-with-me walk in the mirror. Like all good boxers, he does not even notice when he has been hit.

Eubank's new image is Mr Nice Guy. Dr Jekyll taking over from Mr Hyde. "I'm compassionate, I'm considerate, I have no bad vices, I'm good in every sense of the word." He was all for helping old

ladies across the street, but he did not sound too enthusiastic about setting up trust funds for anyone else. "I'm Robin Hood," he agreed. "Yeah, but I give it all to myself." And he was not exactly recommending turning the other cheek either.

"How big is your manhood?" came one below-the-belt thrust when Eubank had been boasting about putting it on the line.

The boxer sidestepped neatly. "If I came over to you and twisted your nose, what would you do?"

"I'd probably cry," the gangly youth replied.

"Nah! You hit me in the eye. You have to hit me in the eye because if you hit me anywhere else I won't feel it. If someone's got a gun, you

say, 'Yes, Sir'. Otherwise you've got to retaliate. You can't just take it." Eubank's speciality is demolishing not just boxers but boxing. He openly denigrates it as an ignoble sport, a mugs' game, just a legal way to carry on shoplifting. But this is all front. He is a man who takes pride in his job. "The way you know about mathematics, I know all there is to know about boxing. You can't catch me out on boxing. I know the craft, I know the business inside out. I'm a master of my trade."

In another life he would have liked to be Leonardo da Vinci or a ballet dancer. "But you have to use what you're born with. I was born with fists." Like most of that strange profession who make a living out of hitting people, Eubank wants above all to be loved.

He reckoned he should have been voted BBC Sports Personality of the Year three years running. He

is abnormally sensitive to slights. He noticed when people walked out on him, he noticed when they hissed. "Am I being hissed at here? I can't take being hissed at."

Eubank reserved his greatest scorn for the media who had misrepresented him as a bad man, an animal, a drug addict. "I don't get the true adulation I deserve from the Press," he complained. But he got more than his fair share in Cambridge. So much so, that he threatened to make a comeback. When one supporter suggested he applied for the Mastership of St John's College, he said: "All right. But I'd have to do it seriously. It wouldn't be a joke."

I can see now how he wears down his opponents. Long after the president of the Union had called time on him, he was still jawing and signing autographs when I threw in the towel.

Record year could prove watershed for anglers



Brian Clarke looks backs over an extraordinary season for the trout and relishes the prospects for 1994

The trout season, just ending, has proved to be the most remarkable of modern times. Not only have the records for brown and rainbow trout both been exceeded by fish from Scotland, but lakes in the heart of England have produced the sort of whoppers usually seen only in advertisements for distant lands.

That is the good news. The better news is that 1993 may prove less a milestone than a turning point. More big fish could come from both sides of the border over the next few years, though for different reasons because different factors are at play.

The most important fish of the year was a wild brown trout of 19lb 10oz, taken from Loch Awe in early spring. It was landed by Alistair Thorne, a member of a team of expert anglers and biologists formed eight years ago to track down the great cannibal trout of the Scottish lochs. It

lake opened in 1977. In September, Rutland produced the two biggest brown trout caught there: 12lb 7oz and 14lb 12oz. In all, Grafham produced six double-figure fish and Rutland eight, including five over 12lb. At Hammingfield, a fish of 15lb 2oz topped a string of big rainbows.

There is no doubt that all of these waters, and one or two others, could produce bigger trout still. The outlook for browns is especially promising. Not only were two brown trout weighing more than 16lb found dead at Rutland this year, but the big fish taken by anglers were all exceptionally young for their weight and had several more years' growth remaining.

Given that a 15lb fish in the wild can put on up to 4lb a year under favourable conditions, an English brown trout of 20lb-plus is now a distinct possibility.

Even the shorter-living rainbow may still have something in hand. They live only six or seven years in the wild and most of the big fish caught this year have been on or close to this limit. However, just a few fish capable of an extra year's growth, or a freak that has taken lessons from Scotland's 30-pounder, could see a naturally-grown rainbow of 17lb or 18lb, given time.

Scotland's relatively untapped potential is a matter of fact rather than conjecture. Several fish over 20lb have been found dead or trapped in loch nets.

Ferox 85, the group that produced the new record, believes a 25lb brown is on the cards in the foreseeable future, and that a 30-pounder may come in time. Already the group has taken fish in the mid-teens of pounds from a range of waters and it has other promising lochs in its sights.

The fact that so many big fish are turning up in England and Scotland at the same time is coincidence. Special factors are certainly at work, but they are different on the two sides of the border.

With the formation of Ferox 85 and some other specialist groups, the Scottish lochs are being fished more intensively, more systematically, and more scientifically, than before. It is neither pretty nor delicate fishing, but it demands considerable knowledge of the quarry and of the waters, and, as Ferox 85 has shown, it can bring results.

The big problem for the Scottish groups is not the availability of monstrous fish, but the ability to put a lure in front of one of them. Although they are being fished more intensively, the lochs are so



John Mitchell, fisheries manager at Rutland, with a 10lb 15oz rainbow trout, top, and the record 14lb 12oz brown

vast, so craggy contoured and deep, that fish larger than any dreamt of by man could live to a ripe age without knowing that anglers and their wiles exist.

On the English lakes, where fly-fishing only is allowed, it is not fishing methods or fishing pressure that are increasing the odds on more big fish coming. The key factor on Grafham, Rutland, Hamming-

field and elsewhere is the likelihood that more big fish are about and the fact that they swim in more accessible waters.

No less than their Scottish cousins, English fish can only become huge in the wild by eating other fish — and the last few warm years have produced excellent spawning conditions for the coarse fish on which the great trout

depend. The same warm summers and winters favourable to fish fry have kept water temperatures high enough for long enough to extend the period when trout will feed most heavily.

The result appears to be nature's usual response to an increase in prey: an increase in predation. And if the numbers of predators cannot go up because they are controlled by

man, an inevitable response is an increase in individual weights, within the capacities of the fish to grow.

In due course, nature is likely to make her own adjustments in the populations of coarse fish, because they are in turn dependent on the ability of the lakes to support them. Until that happens, the prospects for greater trout to come, are real.

Filippelli aims to create surprise on court

By Sally Jones

FRANKIE Filippelli is an unlikely name for a star of the pukka and ultra-traditional game of real tennis, but against all the odds, the likable Italian-Australian is among the favourites for the George Wimpey British Open, which starts at Queen's Club today.

Filippelli, 27, a professional at the Melbourne club, has always been regarded as a talented player, but until recently many believed he lacked the killer instinct and weight of shot to become more than a youthful journeyman on the international circuit.

In October all that changed when he beat Julian Snow, the British Open champion and world title challenger, in the French Open for the biggest win of his career, before putting out the third seed Chris Bray in a sensational semi-final. Snow, the No 2 on the world, is renowned as a steady competitor, so the victory gave Filippelli a massive boost and proved that gruelling training sessions — some with Snow himself — were starting to pay dividends.

Filippelli started real tennis at 14 by chance. His father, member of an immigrant family from Calabria settled opposite the Melbourne Real Tennis Club and his mother, Dina, worked there first as a cleaner and then as cook, often taking the diminutive teenager with her.

After learning to string rackets and make balls with Wayne Davies, now the world champion, Filippelli became an assistant professional four years later and despite taking a chemistry degree decided to make his career in the game.

Although he was known as a fine doubles player, his rapid improvement in singles began when he arrived in London four months ago on an exchange scheme with the Queen's assistant professional, Andrew Lyons. "Julian Snow practised with me a lot when I arrived," said Filippelli. "and he's so relentless you've got to play well and get the ball back from all over the court. We've had these rigorous sessions, playing backhand to backhand for hours."

"I'd got a bit complacent in Melbourne and didn't believe that I could beat the top players, but I learnt Julian's good habits of terrific concentration and consistency and also became the fittest I've ever been. We haven't practised together so much since I beat him in the French though."

Alastair Curley, the former Hobart professional and a perceptive observer is convinced that Filippelli has made a breakthrough and will be a threat to anybody. Certainly, Filippelli is no longer in awe of the top players, not even Robert Fahey, the world No 1 and winner of the US, Australian and French championships this year, who is attempting to complete the grand slam at Queen's.

Cycling events at Games become open

By Peter Bryan

THE Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada, next year, will be open to amateur and professional cyclists for the first time. The decision, largely inspired by Australia, is not completely popular in Britain.

In the first open world track championships this year, Graeme Obree won the 4,000 metres pursuit in a world-record time and Chris Boardman, the pre-event favourite and Olympic pursuit champion, took the bronze.

The decision to go open in Victoria could bring problems as well as protests. The cycling programme overlaps with the world track and road championships in Sicily in August.

It is doubtful whether some competitors could expect or even want to be at their best twice within a week. Travelling between Canada and Sicily will be tiring and interrupt riders' preparation.

Ian Emmerson, president of the British Cycling Federation, while acknowledging that the clash of dates was unfortunate, yesterday confirmed an earlier pledge that Britain's support for the Games programme would be "the strongest possible".

"If we look at the talent across the board available to the home team, it must give us greater chances of success in Canada," Emmerson said. No decisions have been taken about the selection process or the possible ratio of amateurs to professionals and he said that it would be helpful to hear the views of likely leading team members.

The Scottish Cyclists Union has a "degree of opposition" to the introduction of open racing at the Games. "We question the manner in which the decision was taken," Jim Riach, its executive officer, said. "Particularly at such short notice."

Under the new proposal, Scotland would be able to call not only on Obree, but also Robert Millar and Brian Smith. Obree would enhance his country's medal chances and wants to be selected.

"It's no problem for me," he said. "I must defend my world title and after that I'm perfectly prepared to fly to Canada for the Games pursuit."

The Welsh Cycling Union (WCU) also has doubts about the wisdom of the new Commonwealth formula. "We feel that the idea has been railroaded through," Bill Owen, chairman of the WCU, said.

The WCU has made a formal protest about the introduction of open competition to the Commonwealth Games Council for Wales.

David Dixon, the general secretary of the Commonwealth Games Federation, said that following opposition from some countries, the federation has asked the International Cycling Union to confirm that the proposed open conditions meet with its approval.

Saturday portrait: Colin McRae, by Oliver Holt

Ghostbuster rallies to cause of driving out British failures

I felt like an episode from one of those trite accounts of the preamble to an interview with a film star. This, admittedly, was no plush hotel and there were no sharp-suited bouncers at the modern factory outside Banbury, a stone's throw from the M40. But there were coffees beforehand, hushed instructions from public relations people and, most importantly, everybody had been allocated a time slot for their audience with the presence.

This was no peripatetic actor we were queuing up to interview, though. Nor was it a glamorous name from the world of Formula One or IndyCar racing. This was a rally driver, a Scot with a jutting chin and a touch of truculence concealed neatly beneath a veneer of affability. Face-to-face, Colin McRae was far from impolite, but the questions were beginning to pall, the answers were slightly forced.

This is Colin McRae week after all. Like Steve Curtis in the days before the British round of the world speedboat championships or Carl Fogarty in the run-up to the British stages of the world superbike championship, McRae has recently become an annual curiosity in the build-up to Britain's most popular spectator sporting event, the RAC Rally, which starts in Birmingham tomorrow.

This year, though, the attention is more focussed. It has passed from curiosity to genuine sporting interest, hence the strict interview schedule. McRae, 25, is one of the favourites to win and become the first Briton since Roger Clark in 1976 to achieve the feat. Predictably, the title of Ghostbuster has been foisted upon him by those eager to see him exorcise the memories of the death of British successes.

He is being groomed as a superstar, the first British rally driver around whom will grow a cult of personality that will equal or surpass the skill of his driving. He is being hyped by the rally community as the man who could do for British interest in their sport what Nigel Mansell did for Formula One.

As with Mansell, their reasoning rests not so much on his personality, which is straightforward and matter-of-fact, but more on his potential and his aggressive sideways style of driving.

He is not a smooth, controlled pilot in the mould of Alain Prost or this year's World Rally Championship runner-up, Francois Delecour. More he is a charger, an only partially-reformed car-wrecker, driving at his limit, very much in the image of Mansell or his 555 Subaru teammate, Ari Vatanen. He is, most definitely, a crowd-pleaser.

Too often in the earlier stages of his career, he seemed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, throwing his car off the road, pitching it into muddy ditches

'He is being hyped as the man who could do for their sport what Nigel Mansell did for Formula One'

or against stout tree trunks, when a little caution would have safeguarded a comfortable lead.

But he survived being labelled Colin McCrash and the indignity of being banned from road driving in this country for speeding. He has moderated his style, learnt to accept that there are occasions when he needs to drive conservatively.

His victory in the Rally of New Zealand in August, the first overseas rally win by a Briton, convinced many sceptics that here was someone who could challenge the greatest names in the sport; someone who could be mentioned in the same breath as this year's world champion, Juha Kankkunen. Carlos Sainz and Hannu Mikkola.

"In any sport," McRae says, "when you are at a stage, as I was, when you are capable of achieving

something, then people are waiting for you to do it. There comes a point when they start to question whether you have got enough to do it, whether you can actually go ahead and make the breakthrough.

"After that first win, you can relax a bit and approach the rallies in a different frame of mind. The good thing about my victory in New Zealand was that it was a battle right to the end. A lot of people win the first one by having other people fall out. But I had Delecour breathing down my neck, and I won it fair and square."

He talks almost in a monotone, head slightly askew, sentences sparse and bare, their delivery unencumbered by any real signs of animation, save the occasional wry smile and bitter observation about the ways of sparking media interest in his sport. "Maybe if I was to take Princess Diana out for a spin and install a secret camera in the dashboard," he said. "I suppose then we would all get a few more headlines."

McRae's win in New Zealand meant he had achieved his target for 1993 and closed the latest chapter of a career that began eight years ago and made him the youngest Scottish rally champion by the time he was 20.

Encouraged by his father, Jimmy, a rallying institution who won the British title five times, he was offered a salaried contract with Prodrive, the racing arm of Subaru in Britain, and responded by winning the British rally championship in 1991 and leading the RAC Rally until a spectacular televised detour down a bank in the Grizedale Forest ended his chances.

Last year, he drove in selected events in the world rally championship and won all six rounds of the British championship. He led the RAC Rally again before rear-brake failure allowed Sainz to force his way past and relegated McRae to his eventual finishing position of sixth, his best result in his home rally.

This year, he lies sixth in the world rally championship, going

into its final round, and is gearing himself up for a serious challenge for the title in 1995 when he has become better acquainted with the venues that straddle the world from Monte Carlo to Corsica to Argentina to Australia and mastered the asphalt surfaces that are currently his Achilles heel.

"When he starts staying on the road," Kankkunen said, "he will be very dangerous. He is still a bit

of a wild boy and it will not be easy for him to win the RAC. It took me 11 years before I won the Thousand Lakes, my home rally in Finland. McRae is fast, but there will be a lot of pressure on him."

McRae has claimed that he does not mind the pressure, that he would be happy to become a nationally recognised celebrity if it meant that rallying was accorded a higher profile in the British sporting consciousness.

What does rile him is the almost sneering tone some questioners adopt as they marvel at his unstinting commitment to his sport, which leaves him little time to engage in any form of social activity and keeps him away from his Scottish home for approximately two thirds of the year.

"I can't understand why you would think it is strange that I am so wrapped up in my job," he

snapped at an interviewer earlier this year. "This is a dangerous business and not one to participate in if you are not totally committed. The other drivers have reacted well to my triumph in New Zealand because they recognise I am not a dabbler, a part-time sportsman, but rather someone who, like them, loves what he is doing and wants to be the best in the world at it. What's wrong with that?"

Flying Finns stand in way of long-awaited home triumph

By Oliver Holt

THE spectator phenomenon, logistical minefield and endurance test that is the RAC Rally begins in Birmingham tomorrow morning, graced by the driver newly-established as the most successful of the sport has seen.

With a close battle between the leading three manufacturers in prospect, the rally will tantalise the two million fans who descend upon the forests, parks and stately homes of England, Wales and Scotland, hoping to see the first British winner for 17 years.

Although the 25-year-old Scot, Colin McRae, who won his first world championship event in New Zealand in August in his Subaru Legacy, is likely to be among the leading drivers in his new Impreza, the man to beat is the newly-crowned world champion, Juha Kankkunen, the latest in a long line of Scandinavians who have dominated rallying for more than a decade.

Kankkunen, 34, clinched his fourth world title, a record, several weeks ago when he finished third in the Catalo-

nian Rally behind the Frenchman, Francois Delecour, who was his closest challenger in a Ford Escort Cosworth.

Far from sapping his motivation for this year's Network Q RAC Rally, the final round of the championship, the Finn insisted his victory had increased his chances of success in the four-day sprint through 35 special stages in the Midlands, Wales, Northumberland and Yorkshire.

"I will be here to have fun," Kankkunen said. "For the first time in many, many years, there will be no pressure on me to win either for myself or for my team. Toyota, who have already won the manufacturers' championship, The Kieler Forest is a place for the men, not for the boys, but my car will be very good on the gravel stages and it will be nice to be back on that surface again. I feel confident."

The stranglehold that the Finns held on rallying has slipped recently with the emergence of drivers like Mikko Biasion, of Italy, Didier Auriol, of France, and the Spaniard, Carlos Sainz, the 1992 RAC winner but an absentee this year. But their grip on the

RAC Rally has remained largely unloosened. In the last 20 years, a Finn has won 15 occasions.

"I have been asked the question a million times why the Finns are so good at rallying," Ari Vatanen, Kankkunen's flamboyant countryman and McRae's team-mate, said.

Vatanen, who has recovered his fitness and his form in time to prepare a serious challenge for an event he won in 1984, added: "I think it lies with the Finnish personality, which is everyone for himself. In sports like long-distance skiing and endurance running, we are very successful. In rallying, we can grit our teeth and tell ourselves to force our way through a damp, cold night in the Welsh forests and excel at it. We are good individuals but we are not good at team sports."

After a successful recovery from a serious accident, Vatanen was this season ready to launch a concerted attack on the world championship he won in 1981 until a rough plane-landing during the Paris-Dakar Rally in January crushed two vertebrae.

He missed every event until the Acropolis Rally in June and, after Subaru announced yesterday that they had signed Sainz to drive for them next year, he faces an anxious wait before knowing whether his contract with the Banbury-based team will be renewed.

"It has been a typical Vatanen year, really," he said. "But if there is any justice, I will win the RAC this year. I won it in 1984. I was second last year; now it is my turn again."

Malcolm Wilson, the Northumberland driver who finished second to Richard Burns in this year's British Rally Championship, may also provide a strong challenge to Kankkunen, but most partisan spectators will have their eyes fixed firmly on McRae as he slides sideways round the tight, twisting, country tracks that put a premium on fierce braking and acceleration, and skill on gravel.

In the last two years, McRae has led the RAC Rally before making spectacular exits. If he gets his nose in front this year, with the experience of his New Zealand win behind him, he will be harder to dislodge.

Fifa deny forced merger in Britain

THE likelihood of the four home countries being forced to merge and form a Great Britain "team" were discounted yesterday by Sepp Blatter, the secretary-general of Fifa, the governing body of world football. Blatter described as "absolute rubbish" reports suggesting Fifa would either instigate or welcome the move.

"Fifa's official line is very clear on this point," Blatter said. "There is no move in any way to change anything regarding the status of the four British associations. They are four individual Fifa members in their own right and the fact that all four have failed to qualify for the World Cup finals next year in no way alters their position, or ours for that matter. It is a preposterous thought."

If the home countries themselves decide on such a move, Blatter said, it would be different. "I do not anticipate hearing from them with such an idea in the foreseeable future. I cannot imagine such a thing."

Italy have displaced Brazil at the top of the new Fifa rankings. Holland are second, Germany third, Brazil slipping to fourth. England moved up two places to eighth on the basis of their 7-1 win against San Marino. Ireland are 13th, Scotland 25th, Wales 28th and Northern Ireland 42nd.

Sheffield Wednesday have rejected a request by Roland Nilsson, their Sweden defender, to be released from his contract because he and his family are home-sick. Nilsson is likely to be included in an injury-hit Wednesday side at home to Coventry City in the Premiership today.

Craig Whittington, the Crawley Town striker who had been watched by Blackburn Rovers and Sheffield United, yesterday moved to Scarborough instead. Steve Wicks, the recently appointed Scarborough manager, agreed to pay the Bezzar Homes League club £50,000 for Whittington, 23.

Champions' world falls apart in sad cup return

Peter Ball looks at how Old Trafford is trying to lift the gloom of failure at international level

OLD Trafford's league of nations was united in disappointment this week. Of the 11 Manchester United players still hoping for a summer in the United States last weekend, only three realised that hope on Wednesday night.

When the Ukrainian, Andrei Kanchelskis, and the two Irishmen, Roy Keane and Denis Irwin, returned to Manchester rejoicing, they found a deflated dressing-room awaiting them. As if going out of the World Cup was not bad enough for Giggs, Hughes, Cantona, Schmeichel and the England quartet, including the two-goal Ince, they have to start back on the road to recovery against the Bash Street kids, Wimbledon providing this afternoon's opposition at Old Trafford. United will want to maintain their 11-point lead at the top of the FA Cup Premier League.

"It was a very depressed dressing-room on Tuesday," Schmeichel, the Denmark goalkeeper, said. Lifting it has been a major task for Alex Ferguson and his staff and senior players.

Ferguson was well aware of what needed doing, and he got the players in on Thursday afternoon after their return to Manchester from the far corners of Europe to provide a counselling service for his disappointed troops. "We went over the games, and how the night unfolded so dramatically," Ferguson said. "At one stage Ireland were out, then they equalised and Spain had scored so Denmark were out."

"Eric [Cantona] was bitterly disappointed, especially because of the way it happened. With 15 seconds left, France were through and they had a free kick by the corner flag. But instead of keeping it there, Bulgaria break out."

Schmeichel's experience was almost as unhappy with Denmark, needing only a draw, succumbing to Spain's ten men. Schmeichel was more subdued than usual yesterday.

"All I've been able to think about is that game and the way we missed out," Schmeichel said. "It's always hard getting over a kick in the teeth, but the way we failed makes it worse. A blow like that changes the way you see your life."

"And a draw would have been enough for Spain too — we should have sorted out a draw with them. And they scored a few minutes before Northern Ireland did — if they had heard that Northern Ireland had scored, they would never have attacked us, they would have stayed in their own half. It makes you think it was one of those things which just aren't meant to be."

It was the second time running that Denmark failed at the final hurdle, after losing to Romania four years ago. "But that time we were an inexperienced team, and said 'our time will come'," Schmeichel said. "This time we were experienced, we are European champions, we only needed a draw and we blew it."

Over the qualifying year, the United dressing-room had reverberated to banter between the different national groups as fortunes waxed and waned, with a vote for the team producing the worst performance each month. "There's been a lot of gyp given and taken, but that's all done and dusted now, it's ended," Paul Parker, one of the England squad, who were more prepared for their fate than their team-mates, said. "There was a lot of winding up between Peter Schmeichel and the Irish pair, but there will be no gloating in this situation," Ferguson said. "In

fact Roy and Denis both said they found the strain incredible on the night, the pressure was just unbelievable."

Ferguson's response has been a mixture of sympathy and the setting of new goals. "I think Eric and Ryan Giggs were bitterly disappointed, but I said to Eric he is young enough to play in the next World Cup, and I told Ryan he will play in countless World Cup matches, although he might find getting to the finals a problem, but that's something that players like Mark Hughes, Ian Rush and Neville Southall have had to live with."

Setting goals was not helped by United's own exit from the European Cup, but Bryan Robson came up with a challenge for his team-mates. "The only way to get rid of some of the disappointment is to try and achieve something this club has never done, and that is do the cup and league double," Robson said. "I'm not saying they will, but those are the aims they have to give themselves."

"I know they are really disappointed, but they know they have a job to do and they have got to pick themselves up and not let themselves down any more."

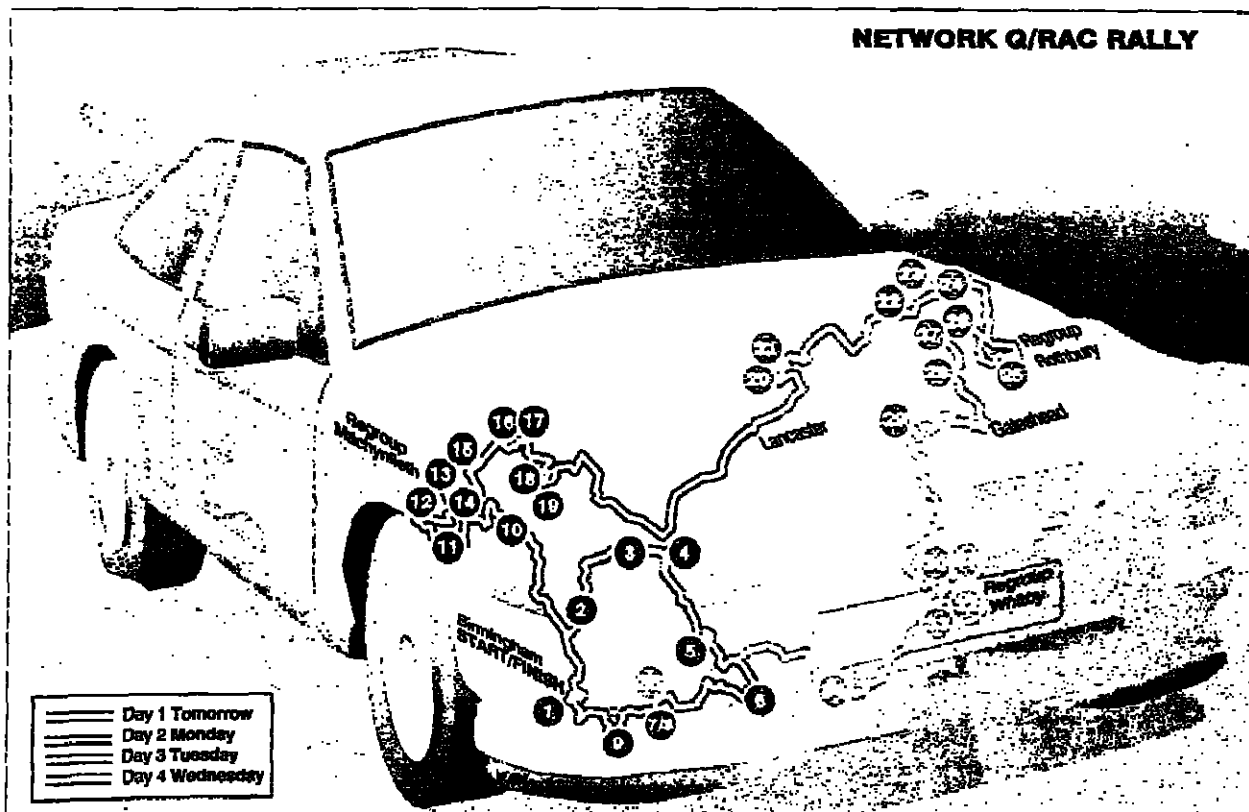
Facing Wimbledon might not be the ideal start, but Schmeichel for one has no reservations. "I can't wait to play the next match to get some confidence back into my game because that sort of defeat knocks you back," he said. "It doesn't matter that it's Wimbledon, it's good that we have a game today and another on Wednesday to help us overcome our disappointment."



Ince: goals to no avail



Irwin: rejoicing



Day 1 Tomorrow
Day 2 Monday
Day 3 Tuesday
Day 4 Wednesday

هكذا من الأصل

SPORT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 20 1993

SIMON BARNES 43

LATEST CRICKET
FASHIONS LEAVE
A BITTER TASTE

Inexperienced All Blacks promise to run ball in search of victory

Scotland
lineout
holds key
to success

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

MURRAYFIELD is part sports stadium, part building site this season: an apt metaphor for the two rugby teams, Scotland and New Zealand, who meet there today in the process of reconstruction.

How far the process has gone will become clearer when the dust has settled this afternoon but, when the Scots visited the stadium earlier this week, they were advised to keep their hard hats for the weekend.

They have much to play for: a new coach, an elusive first victory over the All Blacks and the restoration of pride dented during the summer when the Scottish tight forwards took

Every rugby team has a joker guaranteed to raise a smile on the longest journey or during the most tedious stopover. Scott Hastings has fulfilled the role well for Scotland and the Lions, so it is no surprise that when he was invited to play on the wing today, he regarded it as a wind-up.

David Hands, page 38

the brunt of the criticism for the collapse of the British Isles midweek team in New Zealand. Douglas Morgan, their coach, may dismiss that tour as history but the likes of Kennie Milne and Damian Cronin, who were there, may not do so easily.

The Scottish management, too, has placed a dart beneath the ribs of its own players: they have referred to one-off selections, which implies change for the five nations' championship in the new year. But those players may be sure that, if they perform well against the All Blacks, they cannot easily be cast aside when the likes of England and France come calling.

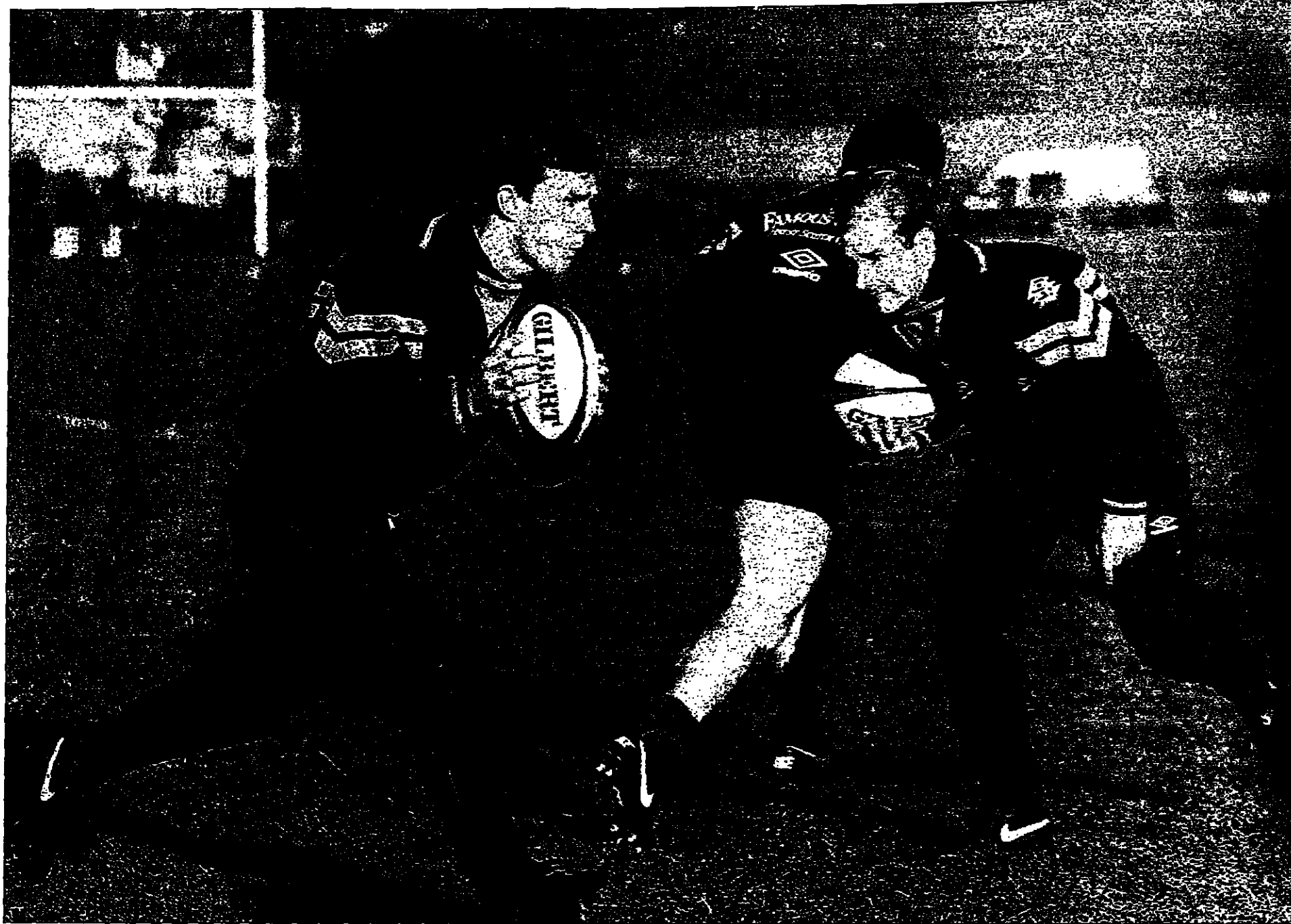
But how to perform well against the All Blacks, whom Morgan believes still have plenty of ammunition in their locker? No Scottish team has yet achieved victory against opponents whom, during the last decade, they have assiduously emulated, opponents for whom the serious business of the tour starts today.

"This is test-match rugby, it's completely different from midweek and Saturday provincial games — more intense, more concentrated," Sean Fitzpatrick says. Fitzpatrick, the All Blacks hooker and captain, speaks of the international game in the same way a South African reverently refers to wearing the green-and-gold of his country.

It is an attitude, a mental hardness, with which British sides have seldom come to terms. "You have to take the pressure of the occasion the right way and use it, not as a scare tactic, but to bring out the best of your team's ability," Fitzpatrick added, harking back to the metamorphosis of his own side last summer from defeat by the Lions in Wellington to victory in Auckland a week later.

At least Scotland have that much to remember. "You couldn't put a price on the experience we gained from that tour," Gavin Hastings, the Lions' captain then and Scotland's now, said. "We have to benefit from that, from the fact that not many of the All Blacks have played here before. We have to make the crowd work in our favour and remember that not many sides win at Murrayfield. We are as well-prepared for this game as we have ever been."

Almost too well-prepared, it could be argued, since Scotland gathered on Tuesday, 24 hours ahead of the time-scale permitted by the International



Jardine, left, the Scotland centre, is put through his paces in training yesterday for the international match against New Zealand at Murrayfield today

Rugby Football Board. However, Bill Hogg, the SRU secretary, has written to the board explaining that, since the Scottish squad missed last Sunday's gathering, the time spent together has been the same — rugby is a game of semantics.

Nor will the support be as substantial as hitherto: 37,500 only can be accommodated for this Royal Bank of Scotland international while the west stand is out of commission, though that will rise to 49,500 for the five nations' internationals and to 67,500 when South Africa visit next year.

All of this will work in favour of New Zealand, who already go into the game unbeaten and with the benefits of a touring team at their

disposal. The intriguing feature is that both sides seek to play the same game, which will create either a glorious spectacle or a frenetic scramble.

Both depend hugely on the lineout where Scotland have placed almost all the eggs they have in their basket and where New Zealand admit they have concentrated in training.

The All Blacks, though, will try to work effectively off scrums, too, using the bulk of Vaeaiga Tuigamala on the crash or the strength of Matthew Cooper taking up the short ball. "We want to play 80 minutes of rugby, which we haven't yet," Fitzpatrick said. He candidly admits the examination which awaits so many elements of his team, notably

at half back where Stu Forster and Marc Ellis make their bows. Ellis, as befits a stand-off half, is a cheeky chappy, a student of commerce from Otago University who, given free rein, will run the ball wide.

He does not pretend, or aspire, to be another Grant Fox but he recognises the opportunity offered him and knows that success here may make him a fundamental part of a new and exciting New Zealand team. "Any chance we get, we will have a go with the wide ball," Ellis said, which is as different from the Fox philosophy as you can get.

Laurie Mains, New Zealand's coach, spoke at the outset of the need for leadership to be a communal ele-

ment in an inexperienced touring side and Fitzpatrick has found that, when the chips were down, the likes of Ian Jones, Zinzan Brooke and Matthew Cooper, have responded.

That is the kind of measured responsibility Scotland's players must find: Andy Macdonald, who spent a season in Invercargill playing for Southland, must show his time has now come. Andy Nicol must shrug off the shadow of Gary Armstrong at scrum half and all the experience of 276 caps, against New Zealand's 185, must be brought to bear so that Scotland may show their refurbished edifice is built on sure foundations.

Kardooni back, page 38

TODAY'S TEAMS AT MURRAYFIELD

SCOTLAND	NEW ZEALAND
A G Hastings (Watsonians, capt)	15 J K R Timu (Otago)
A G Stanger (Hawick)	14 J W Wilson (Otago)
I C Jardine (Stirling Co)	13 F E Bunce (North Harbour)
A G Shiels (Melrose)	12 M J A Cooper (Waikato)
S Hastings (Watsonians)	11 V L Tuigamala (Auckland)
C M Chalmers (Melrose)	10 M C G Ellis (Otago)
A D Nicol (Dundee HSFP)	9 S Forster (Otago)
A G J Watt (Glasgow HQ)	1 C Dowd (Auckland)
K S Milne (Heriot's FP)	2 S B T Fitzpatrick (Auckland, capt)
A P Burnett (London Scottish)	3 O M Brown (Auckland)
D J McIvor (Edinburgh Acad)	6 J W Joseph (Otago)
D F Cronin (London Scottish)	4 I D Jones (Northland)
A Macdonald (Heriot's FP)	5 S B Gordon (Waikato)
R I Wainwright (Edinburgh Acad)	7 Z V Brooks (Auckland)
G W Weir (Melrose)	8 A R B Pene (Otago)
Referee: F Burger (South Africa)	

Replacements: 18 K M Logan (Stirling Co), 17 D S Wylie (Stewart's Melville FP), 16 B W Redpath (Melrose), 19 C D Hogg (Melrose), 20 A V Sharp (Rristol), 21 K D MacKenzie (Stirling Co).
Replacements: 18 E Clarke (Auckland), 17 J P Preston (Wellington), 16 B P Larsen (North Harbour), 19 P W Henderson (Southland), 20 M R Allen (Taranaki), 21 N Hewitt (Hawke's Bay).

Durie lifted by return to fold

By KEITH PIKE AND PETER BALL

FOOTBALL goes on. The recommitments continue over the unqualified World Cup failure endured by the home countries on Wednesday, and the domestic game has rarely been in greater need of a lift. Yet for three strikers and one manager, there is much to look forward to this weekend.

Neither Gordon Durie, who had been expected to line up for Tottenham Hotspur reserves at The Homebush, the ground of Ashford Town, nor Keith Scott, whose last game was also on a non-league ground, would have countenanced an appearance in the FA Cup Premiership this afternoon, but both will play. Then tomorrow, with an exquisite sense of timing, John Barnes could return to the Liverpool squad for the first time this season, against Newcastle United at St James' Park.

Whether he could have prevented England's elimination and secured Graham Taylor's future is questionable, but there can be little doubt that the talented, injury-prone

Barnes would, had he not been victim of a severe thigh strain, have been given the chance by the manager who guided his early career. "I'm 100 per cent fit now and I am hoping to be involved," Barnes said yesterday.

It will be the first time Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, has led his team against his former club in a competitive match, and while he reiterated yesterday that he was not interested in succeeding Taylor, he did have some advice for whoever did: watch Newcastle, and marvel at the partnership of Peter Beardsley and Andy Cole.

A four-day Newcastle "management think-tank" has persuaded Keegan that his future lies on Tyneside. "The directors want to make it the biggest club in Britain and that's my own feeling also," he said. "We can challenge Manchester United."

But if United are the target, tomorrow's opponents are his inspiration. "Liverpool have been the country's most successful team for 28 years and

have to be the role model for any club," Keegan said. "There is something about people who have been at Anfield. You are buying more than just a player if you buy from them — you are getting a professional who has been taught to think right."

Durie's last appearance for Tottenham was on October 6, when his reaction to being substituted during a Coca-Cola Cup tie against Burnley was to direct a number of obscenities in the direction of



Barnes: back to fitness

Oswaldo Ardiles. The Tottenham manager responded by firing Durie and putting him on the transfer list.

Now, though, injuries to Teddy Sheringham and Jason Dozzell, a doubt over Darren Anderson's fitness and a haul of one point from four league matches have combined to force a reconciliation. Durie will play against Leeds United at White Hart Lane today. Ardiles said he had been "very impressed" with Durie's attitude. He remained available for transfer, but "he's a Tottenham player and we pay his wages, so I am entitled to pick him".

Last Sunday, Scott helped Wycombe Wanderers knock Bristol Rovers out of the FA Cup. He did not score, but the 14 goals he had already managed for the league newcomers had already persuaded Swindon Town to invest £300,000 in his services, and he goes straight into the side at the County Ground, where Ipswich Town are the visitors.

Sad return, page 42

Injury dampens joy over record

Lawrie Smith, skipper of the
Whitbread 60 yacht Intrum
Justitia, reports on a record run

THE excitement of setting a 24-hour record run of 375.2 miles on Thursday was marred by the injury to Magnus Olsson, our Swedish watch leader. He was swept off his feet by the green water constantly flooding down Intrum Justitia's decks and thrown into the cockpit, badly spraining his wrist.

It has proved quite a blow for us, for being one man down while surfing through the Roaring Forties makes it all the more taxing for the rest of the crew, who are working ceaselessly to wring every last bit of speed out of the boat.

Though averaging 15.6 knots between 8am on November 17 and 18 respectively, the conditions were not that strong. The maximum wind strength was 35 knots and that lasted for only four hours. For the rest of the time, it was never blowing more than 20 knots. The secret was the wind angle, which remained constantly from the south-west to give us perfect broad-reaching conditions.

Unlike the much heavier Maxis, a 60-footer like Intrum can be kept surfing at 20 knots

for 15 to 20 minutes at a time. As a result, we established a 20-mile advantage over Pierre Fehlmann's Merit Cup and are taking between one and two miles out of the lead of Grant Dalton's New Zealand Endeavour each day. Providing these winds hold up, the 60s will be leading the fleet within a week.

Our biggest problem is the amount of water and spray washing across the deck. These boats are notoriously wet — more akin to a submarine on the point of dive, than a surfing sailboard.

It is just as wet below deck, too. Water that does not come in through the hatch leaks in through the many fittings bolted on deck. Intrum is like a colander and worse, the drying locker has never worked, so we are not only working, but eating and sleeping in damp clothing.

Magnus is now below

decks without his normal smile, sitting with a makeshift plaster cast supporting his arm. His injury has reinforced in all our minds the necessity of having safety harnesses clipped on at all times.

When the boat is running at 20 knots, the waves of water running down the deck are like moving concrete walls that sweep everything before them. If you are not clipped on there is a good chance of being knocked down or overboard.

In spite of this, our 375-mile run was nothing special. The boat has the potential to clock up much faster averages and before this leg is over, I will not be surprised if one of the 60s has not pushed the record to somewhere between 440 and 450 miles in the day.

Galicia 93, and Tokio, our closest rivals, have driven further south in the hope of

getting stronger winds. For the moment, we are happy to run along on 48° South with New Zealand Endeavour, and pleased to have some separation. We think this is the better route and hope to gain more ground as we begin heading up towards Prince Edward Islands, the midway turning mark.

This pin-prick on the Indian Ocean chart is a new addition to the course, put in to keep us from straying too far down into the ice on our way to Fremantle. It has certainly made a difference.

The most welcome aspect is that it is warmer, and having had to sit in wet clothing for seven days, the thought of running on a course further south has lost much of its appeal.

Lawrie Smith, 37, won an Olympic yachting bronze medal last year. He has twice been an America's Cup skipper and this is his third Whitbread race. He is writing exclusively for The Times on the race.

Chasing Blyth, page 11
Whitbread report, page 38

TAYLOR'S PORT
BEST taken Seriously

BARNES 43
EST CRICKET
HIONS LEAVE
BITTER TASTE



APPLE TREE OFFER

Four varieties
to choose from

Fruit identity parade, page 7



RAVE ON RAILS

Europe's loudest
train trip

Tom Walker joins the party, page 3



PAUL HEINEY

Bitterness and
reconciliation

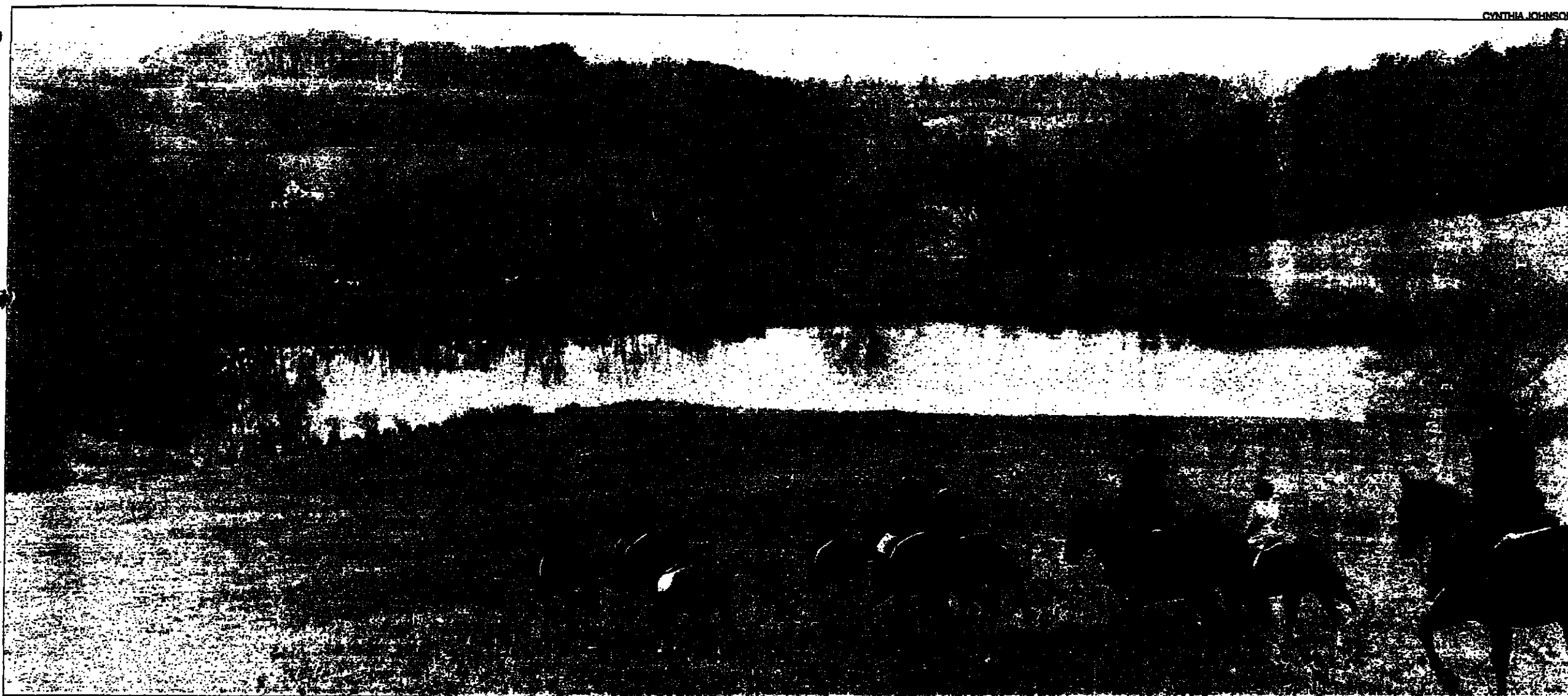
End of the mangel affair, page 18

FRANCES
BISSELL'S
CHRISTMAS
Page 5

WEEKEND

3

THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 20 1993



CYNTHIA JOHNSON

The Old Dominion hunt of Virginia moves out. The riders are more at risk of injury than the quarry, and there is usually relief all round whenever the fox gets away — "We thought the children might actually see a fox being killed"

There is a corner of a foreign field that is forever England, and in northern Virginia it is called the Old Dominion Hunt Club.

We are standing in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains, 40 riders clad in brick-red britches, mustard-yellow waistcoats and black hunting jackets, waiting for a fox to turn up, or out, or whatever foxes do when they are about to be chased across the countryside by a large posse of Americans avidly being more English than the English.

A tiny, bird-like Virginia grande dame perched atop a vast chestnut charger is eyeing me darkly as we wait for the hounds to give voice. She casts a watery eye over my (borrowed) outfit, my (borrowed) horse and my (borrowed) air of nonchalance.

"Ah, guess you haven't hunted here before?" she remarks. The look is vintage Princess Margaret, but the voice is pure Dolly Parton.

I mutter something about how few foxes there are, alas, in Manhattan, and the Virginia lady brightens visibly at my accent. Whatever arcane fox-hunting law I have broken has been forgotten in a rush of goodwill toward old England, home of this most British sport imported, wholesale, to the Virginia hills. "Mah husband an' I hunted with the Quorn last year," she says.

American fox-hunting is one of the best-kept secrets in the US and one of its least celebrated sports. The Old Dominion, which hunts the rolling hills and meadows south of Washington DC, is just one of 162 hunts spread throughout the United States and Canada.

In the west, where the traditional red fox has largely been squeezed out, coyotes are hunted instead, but the rules are identical: dress properly, drink deep, let the ladies go first and never, ever overtake the huntsmen. The pink coats are the same, the hunt breakfasts, the extreme danger and, of course, the exclusivity. In Britain, this may be the consequence of breeding and land; in the US, fox-hunting is exclusive because very few people know it exists.

But there is one other, signal difference between fox-hunting in the US and in Britain: here, they practically never kill anything. When a fox has gone to earth, that is where it stays.

"A fox has to be either very old, very ill or very stupid to get killed," explained my host,

In anglophile Virginia, Ben Macintyre rides to hounds on a borrowed steed but with an authentic English accent. He needs no more

a former airline pilot, who retired here to hunt three days a week in the season, and to think and talk about hunting for the rest of the year.

He described a near-tragic moment last year on a juniors' hunt when a fox had been caught in the open by the hounds. At the last minute, the quarry slipped down a hole and that, thankfully, was that.

"We all cheered," the avid hunter explained. "We thought the children might actually see a fox being killed."

This explains why, in a country where sporting a pink coat leaves you with an excellent chance of being white-washed by an anti-fur activist, fox-hunting carries on without a single voice of protest. Here there are no biting editorials in the Sunday newspapers, no bearded radicals in minivans to hurl abuse at the master of foxhounds or wrestle the whippers-in. Bertie Wooster's Aunt Dahlia would be in heaven, for American fox-hunting is what the sport



Ronald Reagan, one of Hollywood's huntsmen, in 1941

must have been like before the invention of animal activists, barbed wire and that unkind remark by Oscar Wilde: acres of open land, peppered with things to jump over and wade through, and nobody to kick up a fuss.

As I am lost in my reveries at the beauty of the mist-wrapped Virginia morning and wondering whether I have time to tighten my girth one more notch, a rather fat man on a very small horse bellows, "Tally-ho, tally-ho!" Overlaid with a rich Virginia twang, it sounds like something you might inadvertently let slip at a barn dance.

We are off: the effusive in pursuit of the elusive. My horse, Springtime, a vast grey creature, second cousin to a moose, knows exactly what she is doing, which is just as well. We career off eight abreast down the steep hill, through a stream, over a vast tree trunk. Someone up ahead shouts "Voicks!" I have never heard anyone actually say this word before. In America it sounds faintly blasphemous.

Suddenly we are in the open and galloping flat out. Some way in front I can see the head of a multinational corporation losing his balance. Slowly he slips out of his saddle and hits the ground at about 30 mph. The riders behind him slow down briefly to see if he is dead. He is not. They ride on.

Not so much new age, more middle aged

WEEKEND VOICE: Mary Killen

A girl I know has a glamorous, film-making, motorbike-riding brother: a tall tearaway who lives high up a Welsh mountain in a house he has built largely with his own hands.

had just celebrated his thirty-sixth birthday.

"Well, I suppose we are middle-aged now," said my husband, aged 37, a doom-laden look on his face. We were trudging across the prairie to scale our local hill, attracted by the ten or so brightly coloured hang-gliders soaring effortlessly on the hill's thermals. We sat mesmerised as they swooped around us, studiously ignoring us, even though we could almost hear one another breathing.

One of the swoopers had a greying beard and moustache and really did look middle-aged. He hovered like a kestrel above us, but within

range of conversation. My husband shouted in his ordinary-bloke voice: "Is there an age limit to hang-gliding?"

"Ask a silly question!" came the reply through the air. He turned out to be the local instructor and conveyed a telephone number.

"Please don't take up hang-gliding," I whined. "And stop pretending you're old."

"Well, I'm feeling quite old today," he said grimly. "Too old to go on a Club 18-30 holiday, even though I wouldn't want to. Ready to go down with a prostate illness at any moment and I fall statistically into the 35-50 age bracket: the ones whose children have left home and who are



about the years he had missed National Insurance contributions while doing up his house.

"The way things are going, there won't even be an old-age pension," he complained. "It was one of the few things I was looking forward to."

"Oh shut up about being old," I said. "These days people of our age have a life expectancy of 90 that means middle age doesn't start until 45 at the earliest."

However, I had cause to reconsider last Saturday as we drove to Dorset to attend our friend Orlando's thirty-second birthday party. The experience accentuated the subtle difference between being in one's early thirties and in one's late thirties. We had been short-sightedly smug about Orlando arranging for us to stay with him, even giving us the best bedroom. While some of his friends were planning to doss in their cars, we were going to be all right, Jack: a short trip up the staircase to the most comfortable bed in the house.

Up we slipped at 12.30am, he having been careful to monitor his intake of toxins, as he calls them, me having had only one bottle of low-alcohol cider. I stopped short of filling a hot water bottle, though I would have liked to.

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Skiing in Norway, David Altheer finds a forgiving welcome and wide-open slopes



Ashley Brown, an Englishman who has lived in Norway for 20 years, instructs novice Catherine Altheer on the nursery slopes of Gola

Making Nordic tracks

You have to admire the Norwegians. We make Eurovision Song Contest jokes about them, we protest about their whaling, we laugh helplessly when they stage *Which Witch* in the West End of London, we export football hooligans to their capital city. And what do they do in return? They extend the hand of welcome. Their tourism industry is going all-out to persuade us to take summer holidays in a land so beautiful it can only be called a

naturescape — and they now want us to go skiing there in winter. I took my daughter Catherine, aged eight, to Gola, a village not far from Lillehammer, the site of next year's Winter Olympics — and revelled in mountains we could happily slither around all day, with hardly another skier to crash into. No queues for button lifts, no pushing and shoving to get a seat on the chairlifts and good snow — all in late April, when even the snow-making machines in

most of Europe's other resorts have long been garaged. The situation of our hotel, the Wadahl, named after the family that has owned it for several generations, was idyllic. Mountains surrounded us, little-used button lifts clicked up and down, and a gentle beginners' slope rolled away from the hotel towards a frozen lake. I should not have been surprised to see fishermen cutting holes in it, and guests were invited to go on excursions to do just that. But beware: standing on ice and staring through a hole about a metre deep for several hours is only for those dedicated to immersing themselves in local custom.

The ski runs — even the black runs — were mostly easy, but the compensations were the view and a feeling of being the only skier on the mountain. The snow cover on the runs averages a metre, the temperature degrees above 0C and the sun, in the week we were there, shone through a clear sky every day. My daughter, too, got a lot out of the holiday. She had hardly seen snow before, but within a few days, her teachers had instilled a confidence that occasionally worried me.

The Norwegians are virtually born on skis — the narrow cross-country type — and make excellent teachers. Catherine and Jane, a seven-year-old Londoner, spent the first three mornings in the Troll Park, where Magnus, their instructor, started them on cross-country skis, and by day two they were sliding gaily over little bumps and jumps. On day four, Ashley Brown, an Englishman who emigrated to Norway about 20 years ago and became one of the resort's leading instructors, took Catherine in hand and switched her to the longer, wider downhill skis. Britons are more used to, and by the end of the week, she was able to join me on runs around the smaller slopes.

Skiing was not the limit of our fun, however. We got the chance to go dog-sledding, a hugely enjoyable activity im-

ported from North America. Six part-busky crossbreds straining in the harness of wooden sleds seen a handful, but they always follow the same circuit when driven by tourists, so apart from a spectacular crash at the beginning, I found that they can be driven by anyone — so long as the brake, a blade that cuts into the snow, is held down for most of the course's 500m.

Cross-country was, frankly, only for the toughest. Far from being a stroll across snowy tabletop hills as I had expected, it was a real workout.

The hotel breakfast was more my kind of adventure: an exercise in over-indulgence, with huge smorgasbords of everything an English breakfast can offer, including the best porridge outside Scotland. Lunch and dinner were equally good, although it was a mystery to the English staying at the hotel how the Norwegian guests could afford to buy so many bottles of wine (Liebfraumilch about £25) with their meals. Norway's government frowns on alcohol, makes it hard to obtain and taxes it heavily, yet many bottles were consumed at other tables.

The Norwegians like to say they virtually invented skiing, and they have a good case. Children at school are taught the undoubtedly embellished story of Sverre Sigurdson, the child-king, who was rescued from Swedish brigands and taken through trackless wastes and over the mountains into Norway by Norse warriors on primitive skis about seven centuries ago.

They still show off their skill. The hotel organised slalom contests, which, though supposedly intended as fun afternoons, quickly developed into competitions between the modern-day Vikings on skis and the rest. The Vikings always won.

Will I go again? Yes. The pleasure of under-used ski runs of a standard I could cope with made it irresistible, but it is an expensive country. If I save enough money, I may even go in summer, too — the hiking, white-water rafting and lake canoeing must be superb.

THE PRICE

For two adults, seven nights full board at the Hotel Wadahl costs £723 a person (including return flights Heathrow-Gola and train transfers). Child aged four to 12, £397.

Ski lessons: children £3 an hour; eight hours' ski school for adults/children — two hours a day — £39. Six-day ski pass (also covers Olympic areas of Gausdal, Knivfjell and Hafslott) adults £77, children over seven £57, children under seven free. Guided cross-country safaris £15 a person. Dog-sledding: £10 an hour.

Further information from Norwegian Travel Service (0483 756871).

Lillehammer, site of next year's Winter Olympics

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Lillehammer, site of next year's Winter Olympics

Walkers turn left at Gretna Green

Stewart Tandler heads for Dumfries and Galloway in southwest Scotland, the land of Robert the Bruce and Robbie Burns; a little-visited

paradise of forests, lochs and tumbling streams, where fishermen go for a busman's holiday

The ascent along the trail set out by rangers in the Galloway Forest Park had led us up the edge of a ridge with views across the valley through the trees. It was late summer but the air was sharp and cool among spruce, Scots pine and larch. Turning away from a cairn trimmed with vivid, blazing heather we followed the path into trees again. Behind us the outcrops of Cairnmore of Fleet loomed at 700 metres above the dense blanket of pines on its lower shoulders. In the distance the Solway Firth glistened in the sun.

Now we plunged into trees which became so dense we moved in a blackish-brownish light, with no idea of our position. The forest floor was deep in pine needles. When a breeze touched the tips of the trees they moved above us with a soft, dry, crackling rustle; the only noise to break the silence. At intervals the rangers had left ribbons tied to branches or bark to point the way through the trunks.

Finally breaking from the grip of the trees we were now on an abandoned road, which once carried royal pilgrims from Edinburgh to the site of the first Christian settlement in Scotland at Whithorn.

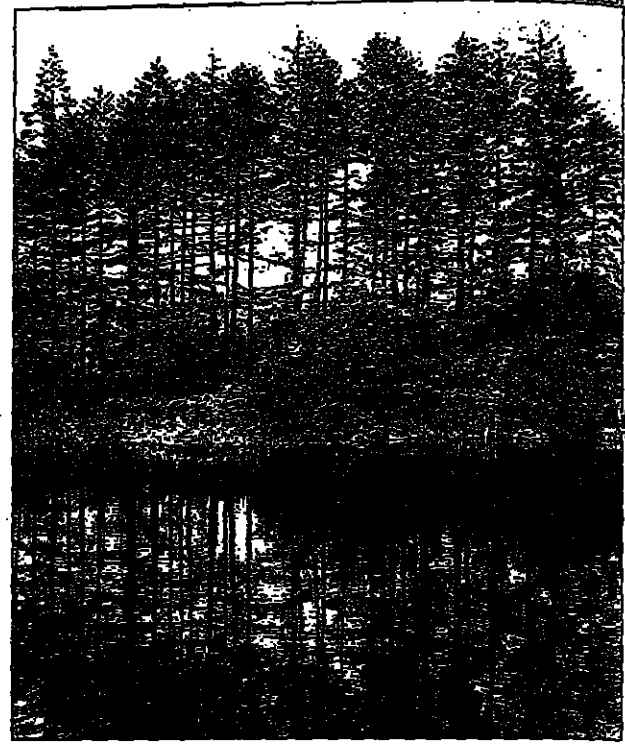
Then it was back into the forest, where we lunched by the tumbling waters of the Black Water of Dee falling away from the grey-blue Clatteringshaws Loch. The river rushed past, slipping round rocky isles. Dragonflies hovered. Spanning 173,000 acres across southwest Scotland, the forest offers excellent facilities for walkers and cyclists, with graded and colour-coded paths, fishing on the lochs, herds of red deer and wild goats. Yet holidaymakers heading north from England probably speed towards Edinburgh, the Highlands and the Isles without realising such charms are close at hand.

This is the land where Robert the Bruce fought the English. It bred the venerated Robbie Burns: the cottage where he was born still stands outside Ayr, close to a memorial built in the last century overlooking the Brig O'Doon. The tiny terrace house in Dumfries where he died has also been preserved with original furniture and mementoes.

Despite such a claim to prominence in the Scottish psyche, some Scots regard Dumfries and Galloway as a remote, forgotten and undeveloped region. Such ignorance is a bonus for those who turn west at Gretna Green.

The roads empty and take the driver past white-washed villages of stone cottages. Drop down towards the Solway Firth and small by-ways twist and turn through woods out on to clear stretches running for miles by the sea, with few other cars in sight. At hand are fine empty beaches and a sea claimed to be warm enough to swim in, thanks to the Gulf Stream: the only swimmer we saw, however, was a small, shivering little boy driven into the surf by a doughty mother.

Near the Isle of Whithorn a wooded path brings walkers down to the shore and the cave where St Ninian, who brought Christianity to Scotland in the 5th century, is reputed to have spent hours in contemplation. A single track road on the other side of Luce Bay takes



Still waters of Bruntis loch and (below) Robert the Bruce

the traveller past small farms and fields of cows set precariously above cliffs, to the most southerly point of Scotland on the Mull of Galloway. As the wind whips round the white Victorian lighthouse the

clouds part, and Ireland is a smudge on the horizon to the west. To the south the mountains of Cumbria are black and brown shadows across the firth.

Kirkcudbright offers a softer image. The home of an artists' colony based on the Glasgow School at the end of the last century, the town's small, neat streets of pink and blue and white houses close to the harbour would not be out of keeping far further south, among the Cinque Ports.

The town lies at the mouth of one of the many rivers which flow down to the firth. Noted among anglers, the area includes the Cree, the Bladnoch and the Nith, and offers a variety of salmon fishing from £6 a day. The coastline also has its sea angling aficionados.

As the sun began to sink near Port William one evening, the first of many sea anglers that night was out casting for pollock at the edge of smooth, gold sand. Hauling his catch out of the rising tide he confided he was a ghillie from the Tweed on a busman's holiday. He would be back later in the autumn for sea bass.

Dumfries and Galloway Tourist Board, Campbell House, Bankend Road, Dumfries DG1 4TH.

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مكتبة من الأصغر

Tom Walker boards the party train from Brussels to Amsterdam



The "paaarty" begins at Antwerp, where the young passengers get down to some serious dancing to mind-numbing house music blaring out at ear-splitting volume

Rave on rails

Above the boom-boom sonic wall of house music, Johann van Peterghem shouts: "I call it madness on wheels." Outside, passers-by on platform four at Roosendaal station can only stand and gawk; it is 11pm on Saturday, and Mr van Peterghem's baby, the Brussels-Amsterdam techno rave train, is passing through town.

With the enduring fascination of raves for European youth, someone was always going to think of this eventually, but you knew that it was not going to be British Rail. In the end, some bright spark from Belgium developed the idea: book a carriage, deck it out as a disco, pack it with young party-goers on the last train out at night and bring them back on the first train in the morning. Make it cross borders, going from conservative, Catholic Belgium to promiscuous, bohemian Amsterdam, and you have a winning formula.

"We're going to paaarty," screams Peter, one of Mr van Peterghem's seven young helpers. To party, in this "paaarty" sense of the word, means to jump up and down to repetitive music for as long as possible. The Belgian authorities still have not made up

their minds about the train, so in theory the rave can start only once the techno express passes north into Holland. In practice the fun starts at Antwerp, seemingly the base camp for many a young paaarty-goer.

We are only a minute out of Antwerp and one passenger, a Dutch train conductor by calling, has stripped down to a sequinned leotard and is gyrating in front of the loud-speaker, or any nearby female.

As the pandemonium spreads, Mr van Peterghem sits in the driver's cab, contemplating his contribution to 1990s urban culture. "This is the future for trains," he shouts, as the door opens and another wave of boom-boom-boom crashes over our tympanums. "My dream is to go through Europe and make all people join together. The train should go to Bosnia."

During the three hours it takes to get to Amsterdam, the rave train builds up its own hypnotic momentum: the dying pace of the music, the free flow of booze, and the city lights slipping by. Mr van Peterghem waxes lyrical: "It's something like the Orient Express: it's the movement that's important."

Orient Express, maybe. But I think our next venue, Am-

sterdam's notorious "It" night club, would have had Hercule Poirot baffled. The rave train has deposited us in a fantasy land of gender swaps, PVC underwear, smoke, and more boom-boom-boom paaarty music. Choreographed dancers on podiums thrust their stuff energetically. As Morrissey once wrote, "Caligula would have blushed."

By now it is about 2.30am, and we have been jumping up and down, waving our arms around, for the best part of five hours. Of the four journalists who started the voyage, two have fallen overboard, tempted back into their beds in Amsterdam. For those of us having to wait for the return leg, however, the 6.20am to Brussels seems an awfully long way off, and the constant reminders of all the fun we are having start to grate.

"When we get back on that train, we're gonna paaarty," whoops Peter, with a worrying zeal bordering on the religious. He is just back from a five-day paaarty in Switzerland. "You just keep going, and when the music stops, you scream for more," he explains. Next year he begins studying political and social rights at

Ghent university. It is at this stage that a pick-me-up would help revive flagging spirits, but the rave train ethos is holier than thou and all we have to look forward to is a croissant, served as the 6.20am train, bathed in a purple Dutch dawn, crawls out of Amsterdam central. The speakers are now belting out Johann Strauss, and some young moron in a Union Jack T-shirt jumps up and down to this, too.

By now I have had my fill and can make no sense of this techno world. I have got that numb, cold feeling of a long night without sleep, and I do not want the Hard Groove mix of "Polix of Dancin'" bounced around my skull for the umpteenth time.

As we approach Brussels, Mr van Peterghem paces up and down the carriage, pulling down the decorations as if it were twelfth night: "Soon it will be a normal carriage." For the other remaining journalist, a mother of three, it has been a worrying portent of what lies ahead. "I really think it's important to bring your children up in the countryside," she muses, gazing at rural Flanders slipping by. On the turntable, it is the Dynamic Noise remix: "Do You Feel All Right?"

Ticket to rave

- ☐ The Rave Train leaves Brussels Gare du Midi (South Station) on the first Saturday of every month at 9.10pm. Stops at Mechelen, Antwerp and Roosendaal on the way to Amsterdam central. The return train leaves Amsterdam at 6.20am on Sunday and gets into Brussels South at 9.30am.
- ☐ Tickets: about 120 Dutch guilders (2,100 Belgian francs or about £40).
- ☐ Information from Gare du Midi information office (010 322 2192640) or Johann van Peterghem in Ghent (010 329 2237472).

MY PERFECT WEEKEND

HENRY MEYRIC HUGHES
Hayward Gallery



Where would you go? Lago d'Orta in northern Italy. It is one of the most unspoilt Italian lakes, and the surrounding countryside is beautiful. I would go in September, when the weather is fine, the mushrooms are in season and the grapes are on the vine.

How would you get there? By train and bus — much calmer than a plane.

Where would you stay? Lago d'Oro, a lakeside hotel in the small, enchanting village of Orta San Giulio.

Who would be your perfect companion? Alison, my wife.

What essential piece of kit would you take? A book on edible mushrooms.

What would you have to eat? Plenty of funghi, pasta, parmesan cheese, grapes and truffles.

What would you have to drink? Local wine, such as a dolcetto, and San Pellegri mineral water.

Which books would you take to read? Stern's *Tristram Shandy*, Goethe's *Faust* (both parts), the complete writing of Baudelaire and Rimbaud and the diaries of Kafka. Some P.G. Wodehouse and Evelyn Waugh, too.

What music would you listen to? Liszt's *Années de pèlerinage*, for their association with the Italian lakes; Monteverdi's madrigals; Don Giovanni; Beethoven's late quartets; Wagner's operas; Berg's *Wozzeck*; Weill's *The Seven Deadly Sins* and Stockhausen's *Sierklang*.

What would you watch on television? Edgar Reitz's *Heimat* — I have a deep interest in German history; and Peter Greenaway's and Tom Phillips's *A TV Dante*.

What film would you watch? *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot*.

Would you play any games or sport? Ping-pong.

What luxury would you take? A piano — I play for relaxation.

What piece of art would you like to have there? Kandinsky's painting, *Lyrisches*, together with one of Delaunay's *Fenêtres*: some drawings by Joseph Beuys; and as large a group as possible of works by contemporary artists.

Who would be your least welcome guest? The doctor or dentist.

Which newspapers or journals would you read? A beautifully illustrated Italian magazine, such as *Domus*, for contemporary architecture. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *The Times Literary Supplement*.

What three things would you leave behind? The telephone, alarm clock, and the most important thing I had meant to take.

What would you most like to do? Walk in the woods and look for mushrooms, row on the lake, read, listen to music.

Who would you send a postcard to? The family and close friends.

What souvenir would you bring home? A terracotta pot, some rocket seeds and an espresso machine.

What would you like to find when you get home? Good news about our plans to develop the Hayward and the South Bank for the millennium, and a clutch of theatre and opera tickets.

Interview by Rosanna Greenstreet
Henry Meyric Hughes is the director of exhibitions at the Hayward.

5/5 Pleasure ratings are awarded to a maximum of five. Column centimetres indicate the length of reviews appearing to date in national broadsheet newspapers

3/5 Live and Lette live: Kathy Lette's new novel *Foetal Attraction* (Picador, £9.99) is "perhaps the most graphic account of the rigours of childbirth ever committed to paper outside a pregnancy manual," said Simon Prosser in *The Sunday Telegraph*. He took this story of an Australian woman in London, who has a baby by a TV zoologist, rather seriously: "Told in a relentlessly hyperactive prose style, piling pun upon dreadful pun, this satirical tale never quite convinces," he decided.

Kate Mosse in *The Guardian* saw the book completely differently. She thought it was "wonderful": not just the heroine, the "left Sydneyette" Maddy Wolfe, and the villainous zoologist, Alex Drake ("the missing link between animal and licence payer"), but also "a cast of supporting characters Dickens would have died for," and the "hilarious snappy prose".

Isabel Wolff in *The Sunday Times* went along with that view: "*Foetal Attraction* is wildly, painfully funny — the jokes pop up like ping-pong balls in a bingo hall." She also tried a few Lette-like puns herself: "More gauche than left," she wrote, "the Groucho-clubbing mediocrities round on Maddy like barracuda."

But whereas Kate Mosse declared "I shall buy all my

What the papers said:

Derwent May's bookbuyers' guide



Pun upon dreadful pun

women friends, pregnant or not, a copy for Christmas". Isabel Wolff concluded "it should not be given to any woman in an advanced state of pregnancy — excessive laughter might cause contractions". Col cms: 77

posthumous book of autobiographical sketches, *The Road to San Giovanni* (Cape, £12.99), by the renowned Italian novelist who died in 1985. Kermod found the same characteristics in this book as in Calvino's novel *If On a Winter's Night a Traveller*... "a glittering network of incomplete narratives... done with passion and sensual application". Peter Kemp in *The Sunday Times* also called the book "a glittering catch of long-gone artefacts, places, emotions, sensations".

In the *Independent on Sunday*, Clive Sinclair proposed that a new adjective "calvinoid" should be coined to commemorate Calvino — but that sounds too much like "celluloid" to suit a writer whose legacy, in Sinclair's own words, is "an atlas full of invisible cities that will dazzle the lucky explorer". Col cms: 159

on four elephants on the top of a giant turtle.)

Greenland thought the latest in the series, *Men at Arms* (Collins, £14.99), was "persistently good-hearted, amusing and shrewd", with its "canine revolutionary movement" and its "sanctuaries for sick dragons". "After 23 books, the last dozen all bestsellers in both hardback and paper, Pratchett is still pushing out the boundaries of his talent."

In *The Mail on Sunday* Mark Thomas went even further. "Pratchett has more to say about the world than a trunk full of Julian Barnes," he proclaimed: he is "the Dickens of the 20th century" and, for good measure, his stories are "what Brueghel would have painted had he had access to laughing gas".

But Sylvia Clayton in *The Daily Telegraph* made one complaint: "This genial fantasy has everything to recommend it but the title: *Men at Arms* must surely belong exclusively to Evelyn Waugh." Col cms: 73

2/5 Latest Trump: A certain silence has greeted Ivana Trump's new novel, *Free To Love* (Century, £15.99) — and it has not been followed by anything much better. "A real turkey," said Jane Shilling in *The Sunday Telegraph*, "whose ineffable dullness is utterly unrelieved by the rapes, abductions, facelifts, leverage buy-outs and Planned Parenthood Balls that cram its pages." Col cms: 41

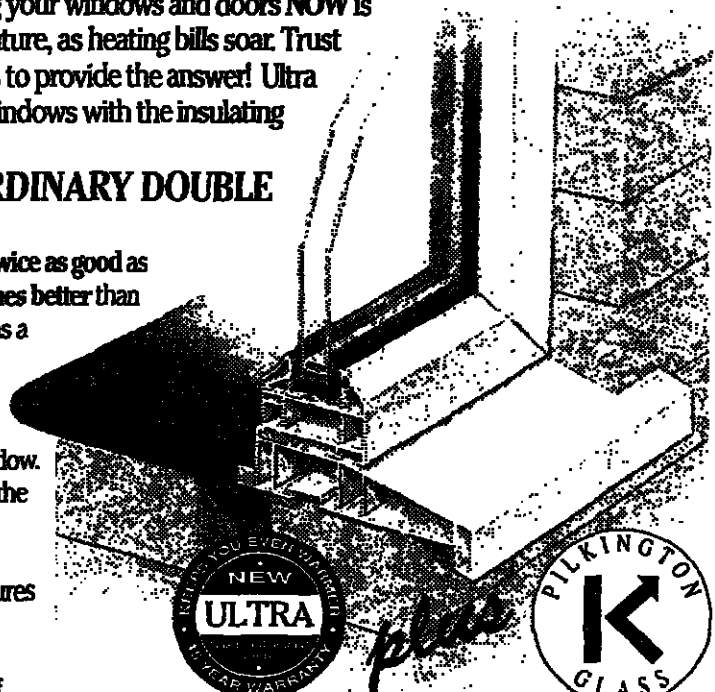
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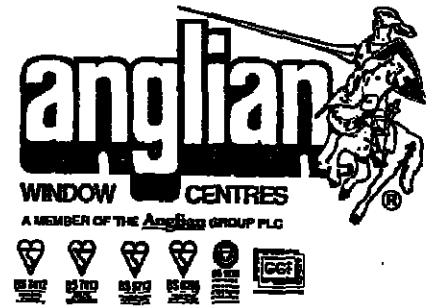
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The *maitres d'* can make or break a restaurant. Ivo Tennant investigates their role and influence

Juggling tables and reputations

The *maitre d'hôtel*, or *maitre d'*, is the face of a restaurant; the omniscient despot who can make or break it. Who says so? Why, the *maitre d'* himself — or herself, as is now quite often the case in Britain. They liken their role to running a military operation or preparing for the curtain to rise at seven o'clock, knowing that they must never, never forget their lines.

They have to be versed in diplomacy, not least when dealing with the chef. They need to be tactful as well as tactical, have a grasp of current affairs so as to avoid placing Neil Kinnock at the table next to Lord Gilmour — as happened recently at Christopher's in Covent Garden, London — have a photographic memory for faces, a recollection of names and what they ate when they were last in, and have the ability to make a nobody feel like a somebody. Of course, they also have the power to make a somebody feel like a nobody.

George Metaxas has been at the White Tower in Soho, central London, since 1952. He is now both *maitre d'* and proprietor. One of his corner seats is the preserve of Lord Goodman whenever he wishes to come in, and the other is unofficially reserved for Sir Alastair Burnet.

Mr Metaxas remembers, without recourse to notes, what Lord Delfont had when he lunched the previous month and, no, that jibe about Lord Jenkins having fought in his political life only for a good table in a decent restaurant cannot be true. He is invariably placed two tables along from Lord Goodman.

In the Savoy Grill Room, also known as the second House of Lords, Lord Archer gives up his table only to Sir David English. "One day," says Angelo Maresca, *maitre d'* for the past 11 years, "I had to move a director of Fort to accommodate him." Lord Archer returns the compliment. "Some of my best friends are *maitres d'*," he says.

On another occasion, two



George Metaxas, White Tower: "No, it's not true what they say about Lord Jenkins"

public figures of similar standing wanted the same table. Mr Maresca took away the knives and forks and placed a bucket on it, as if there were a leak in the ceiling. The upshot was that nobody was offended.

Maitres d' must also exude authority. "The waiters are instructed to ignore clicky fingers," says Fernanda Mayne, who at the age of 28 oversees Christopher's. "I cannot tolerate arrogance in customers. I do not look severe but I can be very abrupt and curt."

She can cope, as she had to recently, with a party of loud, crude and drunk men. She made them leave — and settle their bill. But when it came to arbitrating as to who should be given the best table out of Bryan Ferry, Lord Gilmour and Gary Lineker, the proprietor had the final say. Ms Mayne had plumped for Mr Lineker but Christopher Gilmour, valuing his shareholders, opted for his father.

Annie Foster Firth ("a lady of uncertain summers," she says) presides over Daphne's in South Kensington, where one of the waitresses buys Hello! to send her mother pictures of the famous individuals who have dined there. Ms Firth has, she says, an intimidating tone which she can adopt to deal with any pestilential customer. "Some people



Angelo Maresca, Savoy Grill: "The chef went berserk..."

do like to go out to complain, so I use a few well-chosen words and call them 'ma'am'."

Not everyone covers before this kind of treatment. Frank Muir, the television personality, frequents few restaurants nowadays. "I don't see the point of *maitres d'* and I have often found them rude. It is childish if people are upset because they don't get the table they want. Their egos are bolstered if they do. What is important is to be served. I would have thought a restaurant could function perfectly well without a *maitre d'*."

Ms Firth feels that more female *maitres d'* lead to more women going into restaurants at lunchtime, and bringing their husbands back for dinner. She says that women make better housekeepers. In Christopher's, an establishment largely peopled by suits, Ms Mayne ensures that women are given as good tables as men. "It makes me cross when wine is poured for a man to taste instead of for the woman who is paying," she says.

Having established an order of seating and ascertained who is the host of each table, the *maitre d'* then tours

the restaurant like a panjandrum. At the Savoy, allowance has to be made for Sir Denis Thatcher taking 20 minutes from entering the Grill Room to reaching his table, so numerous are the individuals he will greet. A few years ago such businessmen would linger well into the afternoon: now, Mr Maresca has to make certain they can be in and out in an hour and a half.

The ruder a customer is, the nicer Mr Maresca is to him.

"One regular visitor to the Grill Room came back from holiday, found there was no booking for him and almost hit me. I took him to the American Bar for a drink and he stayed to have a late lunch." Another person insisted on being served baked beans. "The chef went berserk and would not let me into the kitchen. I ran across the Strand, bought a tin and warmed the beans up on a flambe lamp."

Ms Mayne admits to being a snobby *maitre d'*. "If a customer asks to go to the toilet, I insist the waiter says: 'The loo is over there.' And if I hear one of the staff asking who the baked potato is for, I'll say out of hearing of the customer that I will have a word with him later."

"I am like a conductor who is there to keep time. If a *maitre d'* does the job right, it is true that he or she can make a restaurant."



Fernanda Mayne, Christopher's: "I cannot tolerate arrogance in customers... I can be very abrupt and curt with them"

DISH OF THE DAY

Chef: Carole Evans, 50.

Born: Abergavenny.

Restaurant: Popples Restaurant at the Roebuck, Brimfield, Hereford & Worcester, four miles south of Ludlow, Shropshire (0584 711230).

Present: She is currently learning to manage the wine list as well as looking after the cooking for both restaurant and bar meals.

Past: Self-taught, she started cooking professionally after bringing up a family of four and becoming locally famous for her dinner parties. Her late husband reckoned she might last a year: she has now been doing it for ten.

Future: Will be contributing recipes to updated editions of David Mabey's *The Perfect Pickle Book* and *Everything in the Larder*, and would like to do more television work.

Personal: "When we started I used six lemons a week and we had six wines. Now I use a casso and a half of lemons and we have 180 bins. Running Popples and the Roebuck is more of a challenge than ever."

Dish: Pan-fried peppered Treloagh duck breast with a



brandy and orange sauce on a bed of lentils, cooked pink and skin-side down and finished with reductant jelly and crushed black peppercorns, £16, or in the £15 set lunch Tuesday to Friday, when rooms are a third off too. To go with it, Château de Lamarque Haut-Médoc 1985, £21.50.

ROBIN YOUNG

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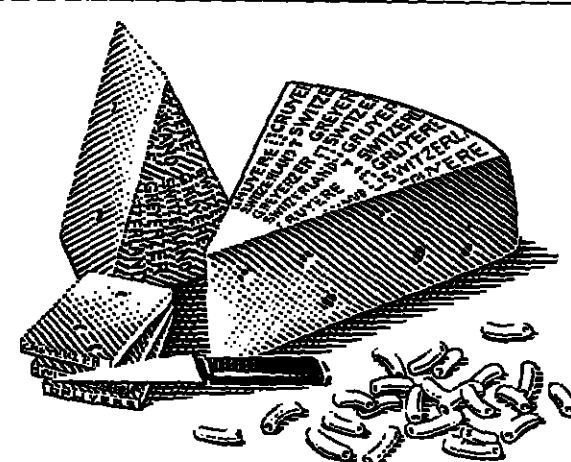
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مكتبة من الأصول

Pudding on the style

I wait every year for the first reader's request for the Christmas pudding recipe: it is a little like hearing the first cuckoo. This year's letter arrived in early October, although one reader wrote last January, asking for a sugarless, fat-less Christmas cake recipe. Whether you do your Christmas baking on Sunday or St Andrew's day, now is the time to lay in stocks of dried fruits if you have not already done so.

My recipe for Christmas pudding dates from my first year as *The Times* cook, when a number of readers asked me for an adapted pudding recipe, using less fat and sugar than normal. I have altered the recipe slightly in the years since then and now include prunes so that the recipe can be called a traditional plum pudding. The prunes also add sweetness and fibre, an extra bonus. Crammed full of dried fruits, the pudding really does not need added sugar if you plan to serve it at Christmas. On the other hand, sugar is a preservative, as it reduces moisture content and thus ensures long shelf life. The pudding and cake made for *Times* readers by Coles Traditional Bakery to my recipes do have extra sugar for this reason.

Suet is not essential in the pudding; I replace it in today's recipes with fruit and nut oils. And for a lighter texture, I use brown breadcrumbs instead of flour.

A Christmas cake with reduced saturated fat and sugar can also be achieved, and I have created a recipe replacing egg yolks with cottage cheese, mixed with skimmed milk. Sugar is provided by the sweetness of the dried fruit, such as dates and bananas, as well as the more traditional vine fruits. Some fat is essential for the texture and I have suggested various substitutes.

However, I feel that most readers will want to make the traditional cake and this is the recipe I give today, in two variations, one using pale fruit and sugar, and a dark version. The alternative Christmas cake recipe is available to readers who want to write in for it; send an s.a.e. to *Times Cook Special Cake Recipe*, The *Times* Promotions Dept., 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

Already up to my elbows in dried fruit, this is also the time to make a jar or two of mincemeat. But I shall not be making the usual kind with vine fruits. I will be including as many of the dried tropical fruits as I can find.

For those who have never tackled a Christmas cake or pudding, do have a go. Don't be daunted by the long list of



The
TIMES
COOK

Stand by your
dried fruit —
tomorrow is
stir-up Sunday.
Frances Bissell
has the recipes

ingredients, which can all be bought in one trip. The recipes are very easy, and the end results will impress your family and friends mightily.

At the other end of the sweet spectrum, away from the hot and rich puddings and dense cakes, I shall soon be planning for my favourite winter desserts, ice-creams and sorbets. Why do we persist in thinking of ice-cream as a summer food, when it is, in fact, the perfect food for winter? It is much easier to make ice-cream in the winter, for obvious reasons, and it is much better suited to the meals we eat in winter: soups, casseroles, pies and other hearty food cry out for something cold and sweet to finish. Start practising now. The best book on the subject is *Ice* by Caroline Liddell and Robin Weir.

Frances Bissell's Christmas pudding	
(serves 8 to 10)	
8oz/230g fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs	
8oz/230g roughly chopped muscatel raisins	
8oz/230g roughly chopped sultanas	
8oz/230g roughly chopped dried apricots	
6oz/170g chopped, pitted prunes	
2oz/60g crumbled almond macaroons or Italian amaretti	
2oz/60g chopped almonds	
2oz/60g ground or flaked almonds	
1 grated apple	
1tbsp grated orange zest	
1tsp ground cinnamon	
1tsp ground mace	
1tsp ground cardamom	
1tsp cloves	
1tsp allspice	
2tbsp orange marmalade or candied orange peel	
juice of 1 small orange	
4tbsp walnut oil	
1tsp orange oil (optional)	
4 size 3 eggs	
1 miniature bottle brandy	
1pt/140ml fortified muscat wine, port, marsala or oloroso sherry	

Put all the dry ingredients in a large bowl, and mix thoroughly, either with a large wooden spoon or with your hands.

Put the marmalade, orange juice, oils, eggs, brandy and wine in another large bowl or in a blender or food processor, and beat until well blended and frothy. Pour the liquid over the dry ingredients. Mix again until the mixture is moist. Cover and let it stand for a couple of hours at least, and if possible overnight, to let the spice flavours develop.

Oil or butter the pudding basin or basins (the mixture fills a 3pt/1.75l basin), and spoon in the mixture. As the pudding contains no raw flour, it is not going to expand very much during cooking, and you can fill the mixture to within 1/2in/1.25cm of the rim.

Take a large, square greaseproof paper, oil or butter it, and tie it over the top of the pudding basin with string. Place the basin in a saucepan, standing it on a long triple strip of foil to help you lift the hot basin out of the saucepan once cooked. Pour in boiling water to reach halfway

up the pudding basin, cover the saucepan, and bring it back to the boil. Lower the heat, keep water at a steady simmer, and steam the pudding for five hours. Make sure that you keep the water topped up.

When the pudding is cooked, remove it from the pan and allow it to cool completely before wrapping it. basin and all, in fresh greaseproof paper and foil. When you want to serve the pudding, unwrap the basin, leaving the covering in place, and steam it for a further two hours.

A pair of Christmas cakes	
Golden Christmas cake (or rich, dark Christmas cake)	
9in/23cm round tin or 8in/20.5cm square tin	
14oz/400g sultanas (or 14oz/400g currants)	
6oz/170g muscatel raisins (or 6oz/170g leia raisins)	
6oz/170g currants (or 6oz/170g sultanas)	
6oz/170g chopped, dried apricots (or chopped, pitted prunes)	
3oz/85g chopped, dried pears (or 3oz/85g chopped dates)	
4oz/110g dried cherries (or 4oz/110g dried blueberries)	

4oz/110g flaked almonds
2tsp grated orange zest
1tsp ground allspice
1tsp powdered mace or nutmeg
1tsp powdered cinnamon
2tbsp fresh orange juice
1pt/160ml brandy, whisky or orange liqueur
1lb/230g unsalted butter, softened
1lb/230g light muscovado sugar (or dark muscovado sugar)
4 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
1lb/340g plain flour (half white, half wholemeal, if liked)

Line the cake tin inside with a double thickness of greased greaseproof paper, with a 2in/5cm collar. Tie a double thickness of brown paper around the outside, and put the tin on a baking sheet.

Pick over the fruit, and mix it with the almonds, orange zest and spices. Stir in the orange juice and spirit, making sure that the fruit is well moistened.

Leave it to stand while you cream the butter and sugar until pale and soft. Beat in the

eggs, a little at a time, adding a little flour after each addition of egg to stop the mixture curdling. When you have finished mixing in the flour and eggs, stir in the prepared fruit. This is the time for everyone to give the cake a stir and make a wish.

Spoon the cake batter into the prepared cake tin, smooth over the surface with the back of a spoon, and make a slight hollow in the centre of the cake so that it will bake level.

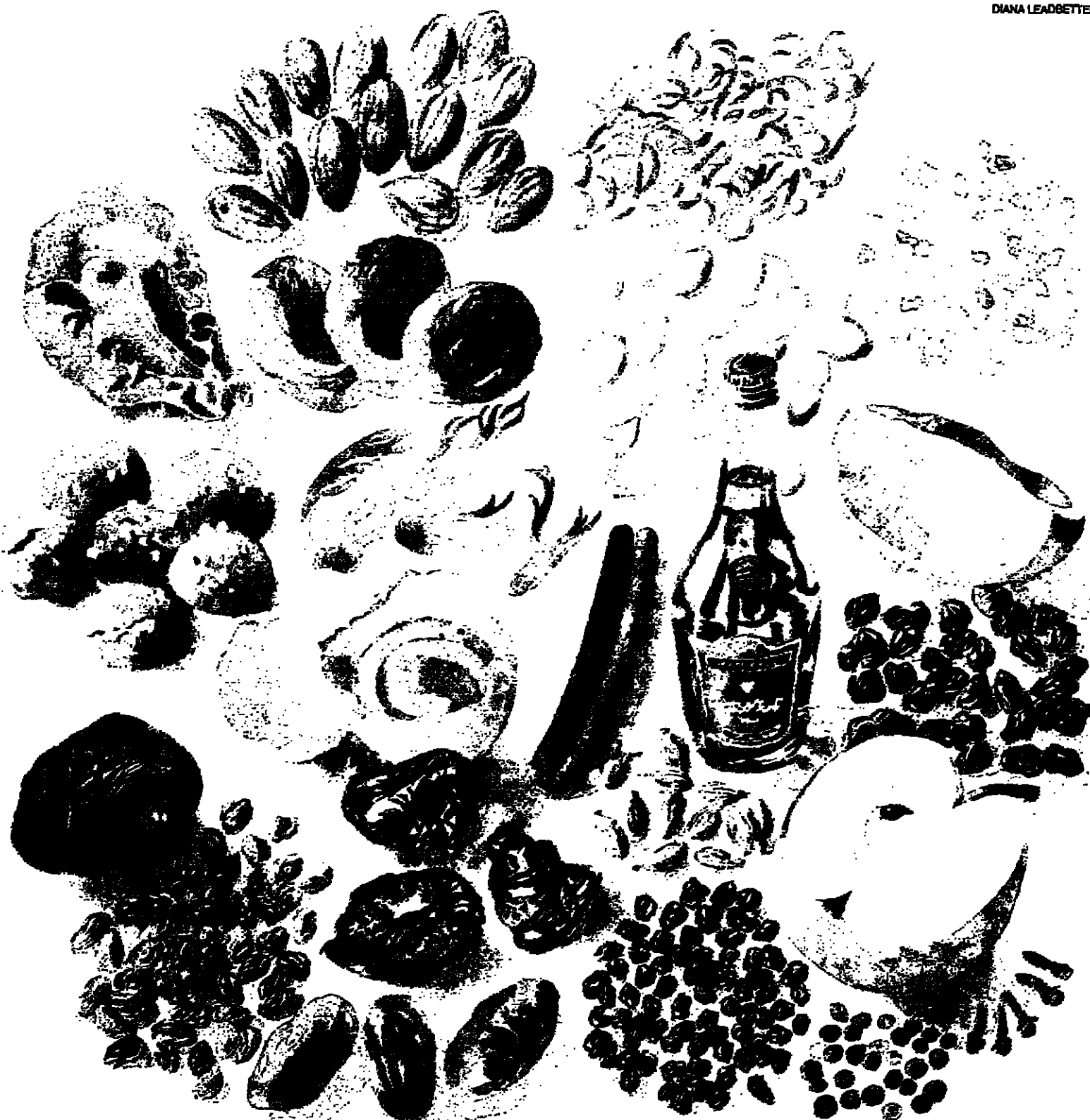
Bake on the lowest shelf of a preheated oven at 150C/300F, gas mark 2 for 3 to 3 1/2 hours. Lay a circle of foil or greaseproof paper lightly over the cake if it shows signs of browning too much, and turn the oven down a notch. Test for complete cooking by inserting a warmed skewer into the centre of the cake; it should emerge clean.

Remove the cake from the oven, and let it cool completely in the tin. When cold, spoon a little brandy over it (or whatever spirit you have used in the cake), and wrap it carefully in greaseproof paper, then in foil. Store it in a cool, dry place, "feeding" it from time to

time with a couple of spoons of spirit if you wish, but make sure that the cake is rewrapped very carefully when you store it away again.

Luxurious mincemeat	
grated zest and juice of 2 organic lemons	
generous 1lb/500g light muscovado sugar	
generous 1lb/500g dried fruit selected from golden and red fruits such as apricots, cherries, cranberries, mangoes, peaches, pears, persimmons, chopped to small, even pieces	
1lb/340g grated vegetable suet	
4tbsp concentrated tropical fruit syrup	
2oz/60g chopped blanched almonds	
1tsp each ground cloves, nutmeg, mace, cinnamon and cardamom	
1pt/160ml rum	

Mix all the ingredients together and pack into sterilised jars. Seal and label.



RESTAURANT WATCH XXXXXX

SLOANE RANGER
Oriel

50-51 Sloane Square,
London SW1
(071-730 2804)

Chef David Witby, late of the short-lived Beauchamp Place, has moved to the self-styled *grande brasserie de la place* and has promptly polished up the menus from breakfast (full English £6.95) through to pre- and after-theatre suppers (two courses, £9.50). Average spend about £15. Mon-Sat, 8.30am-10.45pm; Sun, 9am-10pm.

ROY'S ROVER
Roy's West End

11 Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2
(071-836 5121)

A new venture by the owner of Roy's in Fulham Road opened this week in what was Vecchia Roma and then the Grilli restaurant. Chef Maurice Spearpoint will be offering an à la carte menu at about £25 a head, and bar meals at about £5. Mon-Fri, noon-midnight; Sat, 6pm-midnight.

CLUB LUNCH
Green Street

Restaurant
3 Green Street,
London W1
(071-409 0453)

Orlando Campbell started opening his Mayfair club to non-members at lunchtime this week. Chef Peter Gordon came recommended by the French House, and mixes Mediterranean and Asian cooking. Reckon about £16. Mon-Fri, 12.30-3pm.

PALACE RIVAL
Haweli

19-21 Old Street,
London EC1
(071-80 2055)

This new restaurant is unrelated to the ten-strong Haweli group of southwest London and Surrey experimenting with *balti* cooking. This Haweli (the word means palace) specialises in traditional tandoori, and has set meals at £21.90 for two or £41.90 for four. Daily, noon-2.30pm and 6-11.30pm.

WALTZ TIME
Café Opera

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London SW3
(071-352 9854)

Gregor Schumi, a hairdresser, has opened a Viennese-style coffee house next door to his salon, selling coffee (£1.20), teas, pastries (about £2.25) and Austrian rye-bread sandwiches (£2 to £2.50). A snip. Daily, 8am-11pm.

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Youth versus age

**Andrew Barr on
the mystique of
'laying down'**

Traditionally, fine wines such as claret and burgundy have been laid down to mature for ten or 20 years or more. This practice was promulgated by generations of wine-drinkers who benefited from a combination of cool cellars, long credit and low interest rates. They believed that fine wines were not ready to drink until they had lost their youthful fruitiness and developed the flavours of bottle age. They encouraged wine-makers to produce full-bodied, tannic wines that were unpleasant to drink in their youth but were capable of lasting for many years.

This traditional philosophy is now being challenged by a new generation of wine-drinkers who have been introduced to wine not by parents with well-stocked wine cellars, but by supermarkets. This generation has learnt to expect immediate gratification — a desire which the fruit-filled wines of the New World have been designed to satisfy.

At the same time, traditionally-minded wine-drinkers have been finding it increas-

ingly expensive to lay down wines to mature, and increasingly difficult to find cellars in which to do so. This has put pressure on wine-makers in Bordeaux and Burgundy to produce wines capable of being enjoyed young as well as old — so they have adopted New World techniques.

Wine-makers in the New World preserve fruit flavours by using heat-exchangers to cool the wine while it is fermenting. The introduction of similar equipment into Bordeaux and Burgundy has enabled wine-makers to keep the fruit in their wines and reduce the amount of tannin. The last vintages in which traditionally tannin-laden wines were made were 1975 in Bordeaux and 1976 in Burgundy; many wines from these two years are still not ready to drink. Yet it is already possible to drink many 1989 and 1990 clarets

and burgundies with pleasure.

Clarets and burgundies may be easier to drink young than they used to be, but they still tend to taste less impressive in their youth than the best Australian and Californian cabernets, chardonnays and pinot noirs. Yet the French wines generally cost more. It would be hard to justify the higher prices if they were not capable of developing greater complexity with age. Most Australian and Californian wines simply mellow with age, becoming older versions of the same thing. The best clarets and burgundies evolve into something different. As their tannins soften, they develop earthy, gamy flavours. Nowadays, they usually reach this state within ten years, before they have lost their fruitiness.

Few of us keep them for even as long as ten years, however. French wines, such as those listed here, may well develop with age, but there is no guarantee that they will be more enjoyable. In any case, if you are going to drink a wine at the wrong time, it is better to drink it too young than too old.

BEST BUYS

● Puffign-Montrachet 1990, Domaine Leflaive, Carillon-Thorey, Wine Rock and Bottoms Up, £15.99. Classic, complex, accessible white burgundy. *Odéon, £8.99.*

● Chateau de l'Hospital 1992, Graves. Only but harmonious, new-wave white burgundy. *Ardeche: Safeway, £4.99.*

● Coteaux du Languedoc 1992, Chateau de Granoupiac, Adnams, Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6DP (0502 724222), £4.85; Coteaux du

Languedoc 1992, "Les Vignes Oubliées" Mas Jullien, La Vignerone, 105 Old Brompton Rd, London SW7 3LE (071-589 6113), £8.95.

Serious, stylish dry white wines made from traditional southern French grape varieties.

● Chateau Timberley 1990, Bordeaux: Davsons, £5.35; Chateau Richotey 1990, Fronsac: Cornay & Barrow, 12 Helmet Row, London EC1V 3QJ (071-252 4051), £5.58.

Approachable young clarets, with soft tannins.

● Chambolle-Musigny 1991, C. Mas-Perrin: Safeway, £11.99.

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LE CREUSET

The Get Cooking! campaign encourages children to take pleasure in food. Fiona Beckett meets teenagers preparing Sunday lunch



Guinea pigs (from left) Isabel, Annabelle, Chris and Yassir



Annabelle (left) and Isabel select herbs in Chapel market



Yassir (left) and Chris get cutting — "No, not your fingers"



From left: Chris Boulton, Yassir Pasha, fishmonger Steve Hatt, Annabelle Parnes, Isabel Dorstal in Mr Hatt's shop. He told them what to do if a live crab grabs your finger

Teenagers done to a turn

It is 11.55 am on a Sunday and panic reigns in the kitchen of Willoughby's restaurant in Islington, north London. The chefs are still frantically stuffing the pheasants, the vegetables have only just gone into the oven, the soup has not even got started, and in just 35 minutes the first customers are due to walk through the door.

Fortunately, this is not a typical lunchtime. The kitchen is being manned by four 14-year-old pupils from Northbridge House school, as part of the national Get Cooking! campaign.

Get Cooking! is a response to our growing reliance on convenience foods. Fifty per cent of children cannot even boil an egg, according to research carried out by MORI earlier this year. Backed jointly by the Department of Health, BBC Good Food magazine and the National Food Alliance, the campaign's objective is to encourage children to take pleasure in food and to learn to cook for themselves.

So far the campaign, which was launched in July, has operated through schools and local food clubs. The Willoughby's weekend, offered by owners Lynda Nathan and Hugh Morgan to give children a chance to be let loose on a restaurant, is a first.

The four guinea pigs, Chris Boulton, Isabel Dostal, Annabelle Parnes and Yassir Pasha, turn out to be quite sophisticated already. All eat out and have tried a range of different ethnic cuisines. But as they soon find out, helping in the kitchen and rustling up the odd snack at home is no kind of preparation for serving lunch for 30.

Saturday morning starts with a lecture on menu planning and costing. Ms Nathan explains the importance of balancing tastes and textures. "You don't want a meal that starts with soup and goes on to a stew, or to produce food that's all one colour. If you use seasonal food, you get better quality and prices."

A call to local fishmonger and game dealer Steve Hatt has revealed that pheasant is good. Ms Nathan suggests

accompanying it with a selection of roast root vegetables, starting with a parsnip and apple soup and finishing up with a pear and almond tart. Surprisingly, there is no outrage at the number of vegetables involved.

The cooks troop down to Mr Hatt's shop, where he takes them through the contents of his counter, advising them how to spot dodgy mussels, how to tell if fish is fresh and what to do if a live crab grabs your finger. "The only way to break its grip is to smash its claw," says Mr Hatt robustly.

A visit to Chapel market uncovers a lot of cheap root vegetables, some delectably juicy red pears and a touch of luxury, some bunches of fresh herbs, which Ms Nathan decides to use to stuff the pheasants. "Markets can be good particularly if you're prepared to eat the food the same day," she says. The girls stick their noses deep in the herbs, breathless with enthusiasm. The boys have to be dragged away from the stall selling football souvenirs.

Sunday morning is a severe shock to the teenage system — they all have to be in by 9.30 and straight on to the pastry for the pear and almond flan. "Don't you have a machine for this?" asks Yassir, as he is handed his bowl. "When you're as good as I am, you can use a machine," says chef Peter Lynch. The teenagers — none of whom has made pastry before — find the exercise unexpectedly difficult. Annabelle adds too much water and finds the pastry winds itself firmly round her rolling

pin. Chris, whose mother is French, produces some rather flashy-looking almond cream.

Next, a nail-biting session while they hack at the vegetables with huge chef's knives. Within minutes Yassir has cut himself and has to be bandaged with a bright blue plaster "so you can see it if it falls off in the food". Ms Nathan explains, "Try to cut them in wedges," says Mr Lynch. "No, the potatoes, not your fingers. Don't rush, just take your time. Put the point of your knife in and push down."

The pheasants are not as hazardous, although they are unnerving to handle. The girls begin to feel a touch queasy. "Enough, that's blood coming out. Yuck," says Isabel. Yassir makes his carcass do a dance on the chopping board. "Couldn't we have a break?" he asks plaintively. "No, no time," says Mr Lynch. "You took too long over the pastry."

Now the pace is hotting up. The tarts come out of the oven. The vegetables go in, followed by the pheasants. Next it is the parsnips. The children stop larking around and cut furiously, browning with concentration. "Let's have a bit less banging with those knives and a bit more chopping," says Mr Lynch. "This is like *Challenge Anneka*," mutters Chris.

The customers begin to arrive — the children's families and a couple of restaurant regulars. "Give them something to drink, they'll be all right," says Annabelle, moving into confident chef mode. Finally the soup is on the table. It is good but regarded with suspicion by some of the



Annabelle Parnes serves lunch to her family at Willoughby's



With head chef Peter Lynch — "When you're as good as I am, you can use a machine"

younger members of the party. The pheasants and vegetables are a touch underdone, but the tarts are a triumph.

"This is exactly the kind of food children should be cooking," says Sarah Jane Evans, editor of *BBC Good Food*, who is leading the Get Cooking! campaign. "I'd be perfectly happy to be served up a bowl of soup like this with some bread and cheese."

The teenagers look pleased and proud, although not uncritical of their efforts. "The tart was good," says Yassir, "and I learnt how to cut things without cutting myself."

"I think the pheasant needed a bit longer," says Chris. "I don't think pheasants and rosemary go together," says Isabel. Mr Lynch and Ms Nathan look slightly shell-shocked. Would they do it again? "Yes, definitely," says Mr Lynch, "but not for a week or two."

Willoughby's, 26 Penton Street, London N1 (071-833 120). Steve Hatt, 88 Essex Road, N1 (071-226 293). Further information about the Get Cooking! campaign (including recipes for the Willoughby's lunch) can be obtained from Get Cooking!, 5-11 Worship Lane, London EC2A 2BH (071-626 2442).

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Derwent May — the DJM of Nature Notes — and author of the weekly "Feather Report" on this page — is a writer in the tradition of Gilbert White and W. B. Hudson, and his new book is further enhanced by the charming drawings of Richard Blake.

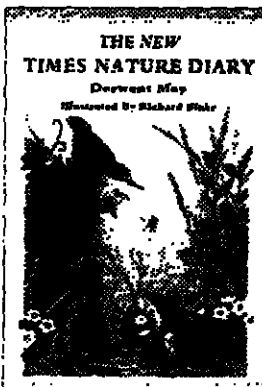
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LONDON

□ Ballet Imperial and Tales of Beatrix Potter. Old favourites such as *Jemima Puddle-duck* and *Peter Rabbit* together with classical ballet.
Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2. (071-340 1066). Today, 3pm and 7pm (until January 8, except Sundays). Tickets from £10.

□ Live steam model railway: Model railway engines plus miniature passenger train.
Kew Bridge Steam Museum, Green Dragon Lane, Brentford, Middlesex (01-868 4575). Today and tomorrow, 11am-5pm. Adults £2.50, concessions £1.40.

□ Sleeping Beauty: Play set to music. Suitable for six-year-olds upwards.
Polka Theatre for Children, 240 The Broadway, SW19 (081-545 4888). Today, 3pm and

NATIONWIDE

□ Bedfordshire: Craft exhibition plus social history.
Bedford Museum, Castle Lane, Bedford (0234 353323). Today 11am-5pm, and tomorrow 2-5pm. Free.

□ Buckinghamshire: "Twelve days of Christmas", newly-opened illuminated Christmas display.
Milton Keynes shopping centre. Normal shopping hours.

□ Dorset: "Twelve days of Christmas", newly-opened illuminated Christmas display.
Milton Keynes shopping centre. Normal shopping hours.

Children's events

Northgate Sports Centre, Ipswich (077 717113). Today, 10am-5.30pm, tomorrow 10am-5.30pm. Adults £1.80, children £1.20. Family ticket (two adults and two children) £5.
□ Yorkshire: Santa train. The traditional combination of Santa dishing out presents on a 45-minute steam ride.
Embassy Station, Embay, near Skipton, North Yorkshire (0536 79472). Tomorrow 10.30am-3.30pm. Adults £3, children (plus present) £1. Present for Mum or Dad £2.

□ Wales: Terryvision. Slapstick, story-telling and balloon play for five to eleven year olds.
Sherman Theatre, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff (0222 230451). Today 11am and 2pm. Adults £2.30, children £1.20.

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JANE BIDDER

THE TIMES AUCTIONS DIARY

LONDON

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BLACKHORN AGENCIES AUCTIONS AUCTION ROOM, 179 High Road, Loughton, Essex IG10 4LZ. Tel 071 302 4444. Auctions of Victorian & Georgian Furniture, commencing 11am on December 24. Both sections on view Sat 27th Nov 10am-5pm, Nov 28th Nov 10am-5pm and Nov 29th Nov 10am-5pm.

CHITREY AUCTIONS AUCTIONS, 43 Essex Road, Islington, London N1 2EH. Tel 011 317 1701. Auctions of Victorian & Georgian Furniture, commencing 11am on December 24. Both sections on view Sat 27th Nov 10am-5pm, Nov 28th Nov 10am-5pm and Nov 29th Nov 10am-5pm.

LOVE ROAD GALLERIES, 71 Love Road, Chelsea, London SW10 7EJ. Tel 071 351 1771. Auctions every Wednesday, 11am. Contemporary and Regency Furniture and glass, Antique Furniture, Paintings and Objects of Art. Next Auction: Nov 24th Nov 11am-5pm. Nov 25th Nov 11am-5pm. Nov 26th Nov 11am-5pm. Nov 27th Nov 11am-5pm. Nov 28th Nov 11am-5pm. Nov 29th Nov 11am-5pm.

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GUTHRIE & LITTLELAND AUCTIONS, 111 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP. Tel 011 439 4800. Auctions of Victorian & Georgian Furniture, commencing 11am on December 24. Both sections on view Sat 27th Nov 10am-5pm, Nov 28th Nov 10am-5pm and Nov 29th Nov 10am-5pm.

WILKINSON & BRIGHTON AUCTIONS, 111 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP. Tel 011 439 4800. Auctions of Victorian & Georgian Furniture, commencing 11am on December 24. Both sections on view Sat 27th Nov 10am-5pm, Nov 28th Nov 10am-5pm and Nov 29th Nov 10am-5pm.

OLIVERS AUCTIONS, 111 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP. Tel 011 439 4800. Auctions of Victorian & Georgian Furniture, commencing 11am on December 24. Both sections on view Sat 27th Nov 10am-5pm, Nov 28th Nov 10am-5pm and Nov 29th Nov 10am-5pm.

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PHILLIPS — Most Sales, Most Places. For details telephone (01223) 316000.
BROOK & HENRY — BOOKS, STATIONERY, FINE ARTS, 100 High Street, Brighton BN1 1AB. Tel 01223 316000. Auctions of Victorian & Georgian Furniture, commencing 11am on December 24. Both sections on view Sat 27th Nov 10am-5pm, Nov 28th Nov 10am-5pm and Nov 29th Nov 10am-5pm.

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Sarah Woodward steps forward for a fruit identification parade in Kent



David Pennell surveys some of the fruit at the Brogdale Horticultural Trust in Kent, saved from closure by a handful of enthusiasts

Fruity variety show

Did you know that on one site in Britain there are 2,174 different varieties of apple? Not to mention 515 varieties of pear, 336 of plum and a mere 272 varieties of cherry. And when did you last hear of an orchard where you can find quinces and medlars, perry pears and older apples, white and pink as well as redcurrants?

The answer is the Brogdale Horticultural Trust in Kent, home of the National Fruit Collection, and believed to be the largest gathering of temperate fruit on one site in the world. Yet until recently this delightful place was closed to the public, and only a few years ago its very existence was threatened.

Brogdale has its origin in the National Fruit Trials, started at Wisley in 1922 as a joint venture by the Royal Horticultural Society and the Ministry of Agriculture. Shortly after the second world war, the ministry took over the funding completely, and subsequently moved the Fruit Trials to Brogdale in Kent. There they existed happily for 40-odd years, the ministry building up the collection of apples alone from 600 varieties to nearly 2,000, and extending the work

carried out by the centre from evaluating varieties to carrying out growing trials.

But in March 1990, the ministry decided "to pull the plug on the place", says David Pennell, director of the Brogdale Horticultural Trust and a former MAFF employee. MAFF wanted the fruit industry to take over funding for varietal testing.

Fortunately, a group of enlightened trustees formed the Brogdale Horticultural Trust and acquired the site. MAFF continues to fund many of the running costs of the National Fruit Collection, but the work on new varieties is now paid for by a levy on growers.

The collection is also supported by commercial sponsors. Safeway, for example, has pledged to support the strawberry collection (currently at 57 varieties) until 1995.

Thanks to Brogdale's involvement with supermarkets, a wider range of apples is now available in many large stores. Mr Pennell expects the supermarkets "to pursue the same route for fruit as they did for wine and cheese", seeking out a wider range of smaller, specialist suppliers. Brogdale plays an important role in testing new varieties, and advises growers on which varieties are most likely to succeed with the supermarkets.

But the best thing of all about the new regime at Brogdale is that the centre has been made accessible to visitors. As Mr Pennell says: "We are simply opening up what the public has been paying for years but never known about." There are regular guided tours of the orchards and special events, from planting a fruit garden to an orchards workshop.

At many of these events there is a fruit identification service, a sort of *Antiques Roadshow* of the fruit industry. So if you are wondering whether your apple tree is a Blenheim Orange or an Orleans Reinette, pay a visit to Brogdale.

Brogdale Horticultural Trust, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ (0795 535462).

Times readers are offered a discount on four types of apple tree from leading wholesale fruit-tree grower, Frank P. Matthews Ltd. The trees usually cost £10-£12 each. Readers can choose two of the trees listed below for only £15.75, including p.p. Please make cheques payable to Frank P. Matthews Ltd and send your order to: The Times Apple Offer, Frank P. Matthews Ltd, Berrington Court, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire WR15 8TH. Instruction leaflet included with each order. Fiestia - superb flavour, heavy crops. Stores into March/April. Chivers Delight - fine texture and pleasant flavour. Stores into January. Ellison's Orange - excellent eating quality. Stores into early November. Norfolk Royal - juicy, sweet dessert variety. Stores until Christmas.

LEAFBUSTER WARNING

The Leafbuster featured in our autumn clear-up trials (Weekend, October 30) has been recalled by Black & Decker because of a potential electrical hazard. The makers are asking customers to stop using the machine because there is a risk of suffering a shock if water from a puddle or wet leaves is sucked into the machine. Buyers are being offered a full refund or replacement, but it could be several weeks before a new machine is dispatched. A freephone helpline on 0800 252661 will be open until tomorrow.

Seed money well spent

The new seed catalogues hold plenty of promise for a good — and unusual — growing year ahead



Pansies are big business with all of the seed companies

I do not have high expectations of the new items in seed catalogues: another brazen-coloured, dwarfed African marigold to join the hundred or so already available, and contorted inside-out snapdragons fail to excite me. This season's catalogues, however, seem a cut above the usual, with some genuinely attractive novelties.

Like many gardeners, I regret the loss of the wonderful night-time scent of nicotiana, which disappeared when the breeders began to hybridise for compactness — and colour, but I have to admit that the new nicotiana, an FI called "Domino Salmon Pink", looks like a good border plant, its soft, dusty pink flowers large and upward-looking.

A sharp-eyed employee in a parks department in the Midlands spotted an original pink-flowered plant in a bed of old-fashioned "Nikki" nicotianas. Years of patient back-crossing and self-fertilisation stabilised the colour into an FI hybrid and built up enough seed for general sales. The result won a *Fleuro-Select* award and is highlighted in every new catalogue I have so far seen. David Chisholm of the breeders Flora Nova, in Norfolk, feels well-rewarded for eight years of work.

"Salmon Pink" grows only a foot or so in height and so is quite well suited to container growing. Under hard sun this nicotiana fades, but as sunshine was notably absent this year, it kept its colour even in the open.

Other plants which thrive in drier conditions, such as busy Lizzie (*Impatiens*) and petunias, also gave a flowery and robust performance. Since I dislike the streaky-leaved, huge-flowered New Guinea hybrids and the crudely veined new petunias, I shall be avoiding both, but I may succumb to the dainty double, old-style, busy Lizzies which are offered as pot-ready plants by Dobies.

The early-flowering buttermilk violas, densely planted in a shallow terracotta pot, gave me enormous pleasure last year; next season, I shall try Suttons' viola "Sunbeam".

A small plant with a trailing habit, it produces lots of small, bright, butter-yellow flowers. In the Suttons trial grounds it was grown most effectively in a hanging basket, which was a ball of flowers, but I will try it instead in a tall terracotta pot. I am also keen to try Suttons' trailing sweet pea "Cupid Pink Improved", in a pot high enough for the pastel and carmine blooms to bush up and flop over the side. As its name suggests, it is a reworking of an old bicolorous cultivar which, although lacking the rich perfume of the true sweet pea, is nonetheless slightly scented.

My summer borders are usually full of perennial flowers so I grow annual plants mostly for containers. Thompson & Morgan's mini morning-glory is one I shall be experimenting with this year, in the hope that after it has flowered outdoors, I can persuade it to extend its season inside in my conservatory.

Thompson and Morgan is the only firm offering my favourite (but horribly expensive) named pansies, "Imperial Antique Shades". They

also have the pretty, wild hearts-ease, *Viola tricolor*, which until a few years ago was available only from specialist firms. Pansies are big business with everybody. Another Suffolk seed company, Mr Fothergill's, opens its catalogue with a five-page display of pansies, listing 30 different cultivars, including the new buttery shades of "Romeo and Juliet" and the pastel "Aquarelle".

There is also a variety of good plants in the listed penstemons, eschscholtzias and nasturtiums which would be well worth exploring, and well-furnished back lists. All in all, it looks like a good year for plants from seed.

FRANCESCA GREENOAK

● Dobies, Broomhill Way, Torquay, Devon TQ2 7QJ (0803 616281); Mr Fothergill's, Kenford, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7QB (0638 751161); Suttons, Hele Road, Torquay, Devon TQ2 7QJ (0803 61614); Thompson and Morgan, Poplar Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 3SL (0473 688221); Unwins, Mail-order Department (Admail 324), Cambridge CB4 4ZZ (0945 588322).

WEEKEND TIPS

- Remove debris in the vegetable garden to the compost heap, before it becomes a home for slugs.
- Protect globe artichokes and standing celery with straw or bracken if hard frosts are forecast.
- Move outdoor containers with winter plants in them to a sheltered spot and wrap them for insulation if necessary.
- Plant new raspberry canes with their basal buds just above the soil.
- Look for canker on fruit trees and cut the soft, dark-brown, diseased wood back to clean wood.
- Prune established blackcurrant bushes if branches are crossed and overgrown to reshape and stimulate new, strong growth.

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Artists afloat with a natural canvas

A thriving creative community lives on Britain's waterways.

Janet Impey is piped aboard

Narrow-boat dwellers are used to few possessions and tiny wardrobes. But even people with limited space covet this season's colourful sweaters, incorporating bold blocks of colour, intricate stitches based on traditional patterns, or the mixed textures reminiscent of old-fashioned patchwork quilts. Such sweaters are considered worthy of a corner in their confined space. The size of the narrow boats is determined by the lock system connecting the canals; to navigate the narrowest locks the craft can be no more than 7ft wide and 70ft long.

It's surprisingly easy to get used to living in a small space, says Louise Baghurst, a narrow-boat dweller of seven years. "I've lived by the sea for most of my life and I'm used to small boats. When I sold my cottage in Devon and came to work in London, I thought I might buy a boat so that I could go to the coast at weekends, but at the Boat Show, I came across the narrow-boat stand and realised this was my ideal solution to city living."

Ms Baghurst found moorings on the outskirts of London on the Grand Union canal and has designed, fitted and decorated her present boat. "The tradition of narrow-boat art fascinates me. Buying the boat gave me a chance to be creative."

The brilliant colours and stylised flowers and landscapes, known as roses and castles, have been the symbol

of working canal boats for more than 150 years. But because the documentation is scant, nobody knows exactly how or why roses and castles became the main themes. In his book, *Narrow Boat Painting*, A.J. Lewery suggests that the source of inspiration may have been the mass-produced japanned metalware and papier-mâché goods, such as tea trays, transported by canal from the Midlands from the late 1700s to the late 1800s. The glossy finish, emulating the popular oriental lacquered furniture of that time, depicted scenes of lakes and castles, rivers and bridges, flowers and floral borders.

From 1825, the success of the Stockton & Darlington Railway resulted in rapid expansion of the railways and caused a decline in the canal trade. To save the cost of a crew, families gave up their canal-side cottages and moved on to the boats permanently. Perhaps the painted castle scenes and the swags of flowers which covered so many surfaces and utensils merely served to remind them of their cottage gardens and a fantasy dream home.

Whatever its origin, the traditional canal art is outstanding for its bright colours — red, green, yellow, blue, black and white are the usual

combinations — and unconsciously, Ms Baghurst finds these colours reflected in the clothes she wears. "Of course living on a narrow boat means practical clothes: trousers and flat shoes are my essentials, but a limited wardrobe demands careful colour co-ordination." Recently, her eye for colour has been put to good use; she has joined forces with woodturner Bill Hunter, painting wooden toys that he makes aboard his own narrow boat at Camden Lock, central London.

"My boat was built from cast iron in about 1900 and originally used as a horse-drawn commercial boat on the Coventry canal," says Mr Hunter.

He learnt his craft in Devon, where he used to be a fisherman. Like Ms Baghurst, he decided that living on a canal boat was the next best thing to the sea. "As you can imagine, it isn't easy to get a mooring in central London, but British Waterways [to whom he pays his licence] were keen to develop the idea of craft boats at Camden Lock, so I was lucky."

While they await a government grant for further development, Ms Baghurst teaches other narrow-boat owners the art of roses and castles in exchange for bar-

tered goods and skills. In such a tight-knit and friendly community, the word spreads fast, and she finds no shortage of willing learners or keen on-lookers, such as her friend and neighbour Charlotte Brown.

Ms Brown finds the lure of the waterway culture irresistible. "I love the idea that we can move when we want," she says. "Even shopping becomes an event when we slip down the canal to Ladbroke Grove and moor right outside Sainsbury's."

Living cheaply and conveniently in the centre of London may not be quite enough to stop the Browns from eventually moving to a countryside mooring with a plot of land, but two other narrow-boat enthusiasts, Philip Bittner and Isobel Young, can envisage no better environment. Mr Bittner, 17, is studying for A levels but cannot wait to own his first narrow boat and explore the more than 2,000 miles of navigable rivers and canals in Britain. His boat handling skills have already won him a trophy, and he has taken a course in lettering and canal-boat painting.

Like Mr Bittner, Ms Young, an infant-school teacher, enjoys the freedom of travel which a narrow boat offers. "Because the boats are so small, everybody spends more time out of doors, and that's good for the community spirit. Of course, there are drawbacks. If you like clothes as I do," she says with a small sigh, "you have to be very disciplined indeed."



Ready to take the plunge, a rubber-suited diver floats cheerfully in an alpine lake before exploring beneath the ice

Divers break the ice

Doug Sager greases up for an upside-down underwater experience that wins the après-ski medal

It is not enough any more just to go skiing — even skiing off piste — and tall tales about couloirs steeper than the cellar stairs just can't compete in the après-ski one-upmanship stakes. Not after you've been ice diving.

What is ice diving — and if it is what it sounds like it is, why in the world would anybody want to do it? My questions exactly, when the notion is proposed on a wind-wrecked morning in Val d'Isère. High winds have shut most of the lifts and made skiing an eye-watering ordeal.

Our ski teacher and guide for the week, Thierry from the Evolution 2 adventure outfit based in Val d'Isère and Tignes, urges a *plongée* under the ice as an ideal escape from the surface storm. Does he really mean climbing into a rubber suit, strapping on scuba tanks and dropping through a hole in a frozen lake to dive under a metre of accumulated ice cover? "Mais oui."

In ten years of living in the Alps I've never even heard of ice diving. I know they don't do it in Chamonix, Zermatt, Verbier or St Anton. I am innately suspicious, not to say afraid, of experimenting under the ice in Val d'Isère. But understated English demurs from the nervous-looking members of our group pass right by Thierry. "Yes, we are going to get our feet wet," Thierry declares, picking up the phone to order suits and air tanks.

Ice diving for beginners is the invention of Evolution 2. Certified divers and freelance daredevils do delve under the ice crust elsewhere in Europe, but Val d'Isère is the only big ski resort in the Alps or America to offer an initial "baptism" under the ice to ordinary punters.

Down to the sea we go — actually an alpine lake. Behind their aggressively jolly manner, the certified diving experts at Evolution 2 are serious about safety. All the gear is carefully demonstrated, tested and checked again after being put on.

A little lecture on diving theory is given, much more comprehensive in the optional day-and-a-half sessions. To anyone who has gone through the statutory courses in diving meccas such as Florida or the Maldives, the level of instruction seems worryingly superficial. There, lessons start in swimming pools and cover underwater signals and decompression tables.

Ice diving, however, is not at all like warm water diving. In fact, it's not so much diving as walking upside-down on the underside of the ice. Divers are attached at all times to ropes, so that they can quickly be retrieved. Only 10-20 minutes is usually spent under-

water in the initial dive. As dive depths are only a few metres, in most cases, decompression times and diving expertise are really irrelevant.

In the murky waters off Val d'Isère there are no exotic fish, no coral formations, no wrecks to explore in sun-dappled waters. Ice diving is more like caving (spelunking) than free-range diving.

The underside of the ice is the wonder. Even equipped with a strong torch, the diver gets little joy from the dark waters below. But looking up at the ice is both educational and entertaining. The top part of the icepack, where normal mortals walk and skate, is smooth. But underneath the ice is a cathedral of spires, distinctly discernable layers and muted colours of white and turquoise.

What's really weird about ice diving is flipping over and walking upside-down on the uneven ice underside, much like the roof of an underground cave. This is accomplished by blowing air bubbles down through the diving suit into flotation sacs in the feet. The diver is subsequently brought into a head down position. Not all apprentice divers manage this feat on the first day out. And

when, some weeks later, I explained the whole thing to a friend who is a veteran North Sea professional diver, his response was a reproving "I wouldn't do that".

Is it dangerous? There is no denying the frisson of slipping through a hole into black, seemingly bottomless water. This is where the monsters live. In fact, the worst sighting on our day was a rather large, dead and distinctly frozen fish.

Getting geared up is half the thrill, smearing your face with Vaseline to keep out the cold, suiting up in the astonishingly warm diving suit. Plopping off the ice shelf down into literally freezing water, the heart stops and every muscle locks up in nervous anticipation of the cold shock. In fact, the sensation is rather pleasant, a bit like floating in amniotic fluid, for those who indulge in Freudian fancies. As a sybaritic experience, however, ice diving will never replace the hot tub.

Ice diving can be booked in the UK through the French hotel and self-catering specialist Tourulp (071-602 1952), which organises a range of alternative activities with Evolution 2, including dog sledging, paragliding and telemark skiing. Ice diving can also be booked directly with Evolution 2 (010 33 79 06 35 76). A half-day "baptism" costs about FF400 (£44) for an under-ice period of about 20 minutes, including diving suit, gloves, air-tanks, instruction and insurance. A longer course of three dives in one day, plus another half-day of diving theory and instruction, costs FF1,400.

MODES

The first of a series on the whims and habits of modern society

the ground, you need "Purple Energy Plates", of course. Made of aluminium with its atomic structure altered by a secret process, they also claim to neutralise negativity in food and water. How have we survived without them? (0273 728997)

SPOT THE CULT: TRUE OR FALSE?

A) Mail-order prayers.
B) Sterile mouth and ear protectors for public phones.
C) Compliment machine.
D) On-street ear cleaning service.

Answers
A) True: for just a dollar a month, a Florida company will pray twice daily for "your peace, happiness and prosperity". B) False: but can we afford to ignore the potential hazards? C) True: the Utah Compliment Line guarantees "the compliments you deserve". Surely a double-edged promise? D) True: in India, public ear-cleaning is all part of the service.

FIONA THOMPSON



THE DEFINITION

To cane it: To subject one's body to high watt strobe lights, higher bass sound systems and dance-enhancing stimulants such as Lucozade. He was really caning it. Favourable locations for this activity include a field or an aircraft hangar.

THE SHOE

As the platform clatters away from the catwalk, the new shoe must be like an animal. Preferably a fish or a hedgehog. Witness Lawler Duffy's scaly salmon skin and hairy suede styles. (071-923 2821)

THE BOOK

Meditate on this: if life's getting you down, why not think about death instead? This year's most up-tempo guru is Sogyal Rinpoche, and his secrets are yours for £16.99 in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (Rider).

THE DRINK

They drank it in *Sleepless in Seattle*, drank the profits on Wall Street, and now Snapple fever's hitting the UK. Soon we'll all be drinking Mango Madness or peach-flavoured iced tea. Is it the death of Aqua Libra?

THE INSTRUMENT

Nobody laughs at a didgeridoo any more. Its funky potential is being well and truly exploited by Aboriginal group Yothu Yindi (071-637 8844) and theatrical club reggae outfit African Headcharge (081-802 3000). Prepare to be blasted.

THE CLUB

Over-serious train-spouting DJs are out. After Smashings frivolous rock/funk mix comes the Velvet Lounge, a new night on Fridays at The Frigate, with Jay Strongman on the decks. (071-326 5100)

THE THERAPY

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هكذا من الأصل

Advertising antiques are very collectable, **Joseph Connolly** says

Signs of the times can fetch a packet

Elizabeth Farrow is one of the unsung heroines of 1960s pop culture, for it is she who single-handedly took the Union Jack down from the flagpole and boldly slapped it on to every manner of thing, from brass alarm clocks to tea-cosies.

With her first husband — Robin, a graphic designer — she founded the company Dodo Designs, which went on to enjoy huge success reproducing beautiful old enamel signs, extolling the virtues of Camp Coffee, Rose's Lime Juice, Fry's Chocolate and dozens of others. From the time of *With The Beatles* to *Sergeant Pepper* and beyond, the Dodo was one of the most swinging birds in London.

The irony of all this was that at the same time reproduction enamel signs and tins were selling hand over fist in King's Road and the West End, in Ms Farrow's shop in less trendy Westbourne Grove, she was having trouble giving away the originals. "Some of the large signs — they would cover half a wall — Robin and I would buy for next to nothing and try to sell for 25/- [£1.25]: nobody was interested."

Thirty years on, Ms Farrow is still dealing in her beloved advertising antiques. She has a stall, although she is negotiating for a shop in Westbourne Grove – just off Portobello Road – and another in Alfie Antique Market, in Church Street, northwest London. Large, original posters sell for between £15 and £300, the higher prices being accorded to anything pre-1930 and prime: Guinness, say, or Michelin. They jostle with enamels, tins, showcards, labels, packets and shop window dummies. So buoyant is the market these days that she finds it increasingly difficult to obtain good stock.

"By the early 1970s," she says, "advertising antiques had become very fashionable, and dealers were springing up everywhere. Most have fallen away, and the most sensible of those remaining do something else besides. I don't. It is too much a part of me."

So who buys all these decorative advertising signs, so

TOP TEN *fields of interest*

- 1 Early motoring
- 2 Early flight
- 3 British Railways (not
(British Rail))
- 4 Biscuit tins
- 5 Tobacco products
- 6 Breweries (beer etc)
- 7 Household products
- 8 Scotch whisky products
- 9 Showcases
- 10 Oursize display
dummies

TOP TEN brands

- 1 Huntley & Palmer
- 2 Guinness
- 3 Oxo
- 4 Michelin
(with Bibendum)
- 5 Coca-Cola
- 6 Cadburys
- 7 Fry's
- 8 Player's
- 9 Bovril
- 10 Bisto

Where to find the hard sell

IT IS very difficult to be even sweepingly general about values and prices because the field embraces everything from relatively common sweet or tobacco tins (£1 to £5) to glorious mirrors, enamels and even furniture (£100 up to a few thousand).

□ Elizabeth Farrow is at 280 Westbourne Grove, London W11. Saturdays only, 7am-4pm. A few other stalls and arcades in nearby Portobello Road also specialise in the field. Ms Farrow is also at Alfies Antique Market, 13-25 Church Street, London NW3 (071-706 1545). Also at Alfies are David Huxtable (2nd floor), specialising in tins, advertising, and commemorative ware (071-723 6105), and Legacy, specialising in ephemera (071-723 0449). Alfies Antique Market is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am-5pm.

☐ *The Lyle Price Guide to Advertising Antiques* by Tony Curtis is published by Lyle at £16.95.

☐ The Museum of Advertising and Packaging, Albert Warehouse, Gloucester Docks, Gloucester GL1 2EH (0452 302309). Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am-5pm.

Elizabeth Farrow (above) says pre-1930 publicity material such as this Michelin sign commands high prices; condition rather than rarity is the deciding factor

TOP
Louise wears wool-mix sweater, £49.95, by Java (071-323 2725 for stockists). Lycra leggings, £17, Marks & Spencer. Bill wears patchwork sweater, £71, by Sisley from selected branches Benetton (071-731 4564 for stockists). Jeans shirt, £19.99 and jeans, £19.99, both Marks & Spencer.

ABOVE
Charlotte wears wool tunic, £29.99 and leggings, £25.99, both Wallis branches nationwide (081-202 8252 for stockists). Ankle boots, £39, Cable & Co (071-629 9969 for stockists).

LEFT
Philip wears brushed cotton
multicoloured check shirt,
£25, and jeans, £19.99, both
Marks & Spencer. Navy wool
waistcoat, £57,
French Connection, all
branches (071-580 2507 for
stockists).

RIGHT
Isobel wears wool patchwork sweater, £69.99, loose fit cotton jeans, £29.99, both Next branches (and mail order, 0345 100500). Nubuck ankle boots, £45, Cable & Co, all branches.

LEFT BELOW
*Louise wears Susan Woolf
 pure wool sweater, £149 (071-
 584 7047 for stockists); brown
 cord trousers by PTA, £64.99
 (071-437 8569).*

Socks throughout from a selection at Sock Shop branches nationwide.

*Photographs
by Denzil McNeelance.
Styling by Janet Impey*

From left, Philip wears baggy V-neck wool sweater from Sisley, £51, Benetton (071-731 4564 for stockists); check shirt, £19.99, Marks & Spencer; bottle green jeans, £45, French Connection (071-580 2507 for stockists). Bill wears wool sweater, £39.95, denim shirt, £19.99, jeans, £19.99, all Marks & Spencer. Charlotte (foreground) wears long cardigan, £57.90, over plain sweater, £57.90, both StEganel (071-629 7164 for stockists). Lyra leggings, £17, Marks & Spencer. Isabel wears patchwork wool sweater, £65, needlecord trousers, £50, both French Connection (071-580 2507 for stockists). Louise wears rainbow wool cardigan, £91, Benetton, with Sisley plain wool sweater, £61, from selected branches of Benetton (071-731 4564 for stockists). Lyra leggings, £17, Marks & Spencer.

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Give a thought to the environment before you restore or improve your home, Lynne Greenwood says

As nature intended



Sue and Chris Bond (above left) outside their mill house. Above from left: Harriet Walsh, Heimir Salt, Jane Runchman and Nick Arrow

If you plan to rescue a derelict property or simply to improve your existing home, spare a thought for the environment. There is no doubt that the nitty-gritty details of our domestic arrangements affect the global ecosystem in a profound way," says Edward Harland, an architect. But we can begin to make changes that will alter our existing houses from having a damaging effect to a neutral and even a healing effect.

In his book *Eco-Renovation*, he suggests four ways to make ecologically sound changes to your house: by saving energy, by choosing environmentally friendly materials, by organising space to better effect and by creating healthier surroundings. Space-efficiency, according to Mr Harland, is as important as energy-efficiency. "We need to balance up the seeming convenience of a separate room for each activity with the wastefulness of having expensively equipped accommodation for much of the time," he says. Among energy-saving measures, he identifies insulation as the most important. And he says we can halve domestic fuel bills and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 75 per cent.

As for health, he says we must take seriously the threat from toxins found in timber treatments, plastics and some paints used in the home. Did you know, for instance, that the common spider plant absorbs formaldehyde, a toxic substance given off by many new building materials?

When Dr Chris Bond, a lecturer in accountancy at Hull University, and his family moved to a Grade II listed former flour mill at Pocklington, near York, they made it clear to the Ecology Building Society — whose borrowers are expected to display sound ecological principles — that they were eager to renovate in a sympathetic and energy-efficient manner.

The mill's two acres of land included an overgrown orchard, untended vegetable garden and mill pond, which Dr Bond's wife Sue was eager to restore. Dr Bond hand-scythed the orchard, rather than tackle it with the gardeners' favourite, the strimmer. "It seemed quieter and more energy-efficient," he says.

Indoors, Dr Bond was anxious to insulate the brick-built mill, with

its water-wheel still in place, to the highest standard he could afford, and to install the most energy-efficient heating system for the large, rambling house. He has chosen a Kiddy boiler, heavily insulated in an airtight casing, whose claim to save not less than 40 per cent of previous fuel bills is undisputed. He has used two inches of under-floor polystyrene insulation and four inches in some walls. "We are aware of preserving the house in a way which balances an old property with modern living," he says.

The same principles are being applied by a group of five friends who have the luxury of starting from the foundations. They are committed to a self-build project of a terrace of three houses, applying strict ecological principles, again

with money borrowed from the Ecology Building Society.

In May, on a suburban site in Leeds overlooking Gledhow Valley, they started work on the four-bedroom homes they hope to occupy next year. The homes will have timber frames, and be roofed with red clay tiles at the front to match adjoining properties, and with soil and sedum rockery plants at the back, to blend in with the landscape. Architect Jonathan Lindh, who is building one of the houses with partner Harriet Walsh, says: "Historically earth was the original form of roofing, and we will be working directly with something that is living. There will be a waterproof membrane beneath the plants, which will add to the insulation."

The homes will recycle water

from washing through a reed bed. Another of the do-it-yourself builders, Heimir Salt, plans triple glazing in his house, using a glass which reflects heat into the house and heating based on a wood stove and ducted warm air.

"We are trying to use local materials where possible, and ones which do not cause pollution either while they are being made or afterwards," says Mr Salt.

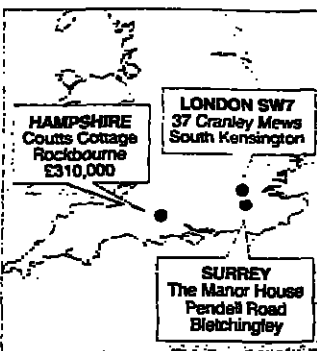
Jonathan Lindh will address a seminar on the scheme at a Yorkshire RIBA seminar entitled "Self-build — Green Specification" on Thursday at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds (enquiries to Ken Appleby, RIBA, Leeds, 0532 456250). Eco-Renovation — The Ecological Home Improvement Guide is published by Green Books (1993). The Ecology Building Society is at 18 Station Road, Cross Hills, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD20 7EF (0535 659933).



Hampshire: Courts Cottage, Rockbourne, Hampshire. Modernised and extended Grade II listed period cottage in half an acre of mature walled gardens on the edge of an attractive village. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite), en-suite shower-room, three reception rooms (with beamed ceilings and an inglenook fireplace), kitchen/breakfast-room, garden room, utility room. About £310,000 (Savills, 0722 320422).

FOR SALE

around
£300,000



London: 37 Cranley Mews, South Kensington, SW7. Freehold double-fronted house (fully renovated) in a cobbled mews near Gloucester Road. Three bedrooms, bathroom, en-suite shower-room, drawing-room. Garage. About £295,000 (John D. Wood, 071-352 1484).



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The bedding is over and tears have replaced romance

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

One of the great romances of our time, I can exclusively reveal, is heading for the rocks, and is going to end in tears. In its time it has rivalled Burton and Taylor, Scarlett and Rhett for the headlines. But now I foresee nothing but bitter recrimination and public accusations from both sides. This is going to be a messy business.

The sad truth is that it is all over between us.

The break-up has been much swifter than I ever thought possible. We have shared a mutually passionate relationship ever since I started to farm, and I would never have believed it possible that I could utter the words I am about to speak, but...

I am sick of the sight of mangel-wurzels. I hate them, loathe them. I have been grubbing them from the ground which they have been reluctant to leave, flinging them into a cart which has groaned

under their weight, pulled by a cart-horse which was hardly able to keep his feet in the filthy mess the mangels have left behind.

In past years, it has always been a chore, but never the torture that lifting this year's crop entailed. We have hauled nearly 30 tons of the lousy things, all by hand, and they now lie in a huge, straw-covered mound.

I cannot even bring myself to look at them; and we certainly do not speak.

Admittedly, I did not start the mangel-lifting in the finest of health: a bad cold had settled on my chest - shivering chills alternating with fevers - but you cannot tell this to the weather, which was lying in wait with its icy fingers poised to scatter a frost

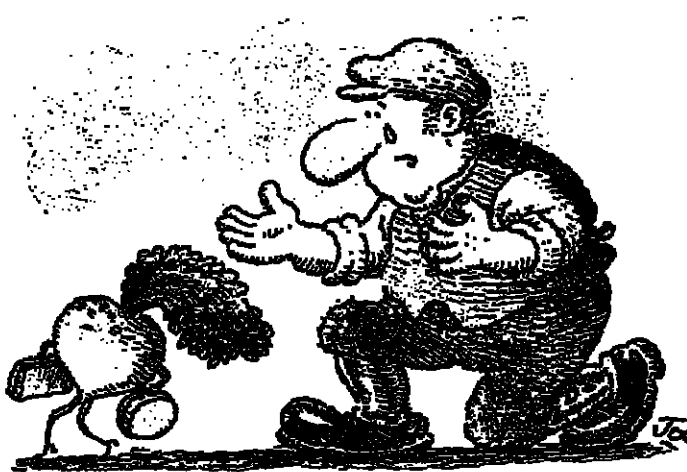


over the field of mangels and reduce them to pulp.

A touch of ground frost will not harm them, because their leaves act as a canopy and take the edge off the chill. But a biting air frost will scar them and turn them to that same squashy and stinking consistency of an aged cucumber left forgotten in the fridge.

There were other pressures, too. My old farmhand Dilly was on the phone: "Best get them up, boy! It's gettin' on." It was, too. We were into the second week in November and anyone else foolish enough to grow mangels had already lifted them and put them safely to bed for the winter.

Cold or no cold, we set to work. The first half hour was fine. Dilly slashed the green tips of the



mangels and hauled their roots while we went behind with the horse and cart, flinging them on to it. Then my weakened physical state took over and those juices, which one's body produces in abundance at times like these,

started to flow like the Mississippi in full spate. As I bent to lift the mangels, they slopped forward filling my forehead and, when I rose to fling the roots into the cart, they sloshed backwards until the inside of my head became like the

swimming pool of the QE2 in the middle of an Atlantic storm.

Dilly was loving it: cheerily he swiped off the tops - always with accuracy, for the mangel root must not be cut in any way or the wound will effect a kind of bleed and gradually grow rotten from the point the incision was made. And if that particular root came into contact with other mangels, as it would do in the heap, it would turn them rotten, too.

A vindictive little beast is the mangel: if it is going to suffer, it makes sure everyone else does as well. But there I go again, bitterness and recrimination.

No doubt the mangel will be telling its own tale next: I shall be painted as forgetful and uncaring, even unfaithful, in that I neglected to hoe the rows of stubby young plants in favour of an afternoon with the frilly and luscious young shoots of the kale. And I cannot disagree: who could resist turning

his head towards fresh, sprouting young stuff when the alternative is a day in the company of a bulbous, gnarled, swollen and knobby root which typifies the mangel-wurzel from its earliest days?

And yet, for all this bile, I have the slight suspicion that we may yet kiss and make up.

Despite 30 tons of muddy mangel misery, I know that come the end of the year, when the east winds cut through the farmyard and the stock look pleadingly for something sweet to chew, the mangel will be sitting there beneath her skirts of straw, a comforting maternal presence. The skirt will lift just the merest of inches in the breeze and the sight of her succulence will captivate me once again.

I shall have forgotten the aching week that has just past and will be on the phone to the seed merchant to order next year's crops.

Mangels!

Having hens in the back garden can be therapeutic as well as productive. Helen Pickles reports on keeping rare species



Richard and Jenny Robinson at their home in south London, where they keep Cream Legbars, which lay blue eggs. Right: David Applegarth, a breeder of rare birds. Below, from left: eggs of the Golden Legbar, Rhodebar, Welbar and Cream Legbar

Why the chicken moved to suburbia

The urban pursuit of the good life should not be mocked. Free-range hens clucking around semi-detached suburbia are ensuring the survival of endangered species.

"One of the problems of breeding rare poultry is that they're usually kept in too small numbers," says David Applegarth, an agricultural consultant. "To be successful, you must be able to breed and select from large flocks. The people who buy hens from me help to keep my breeding programme going."

The garden, shrubbery and greenhouses surrounding Mr Applegarth's house near Beverley on Humberside are littered with strutting cockerels and anxious hens towing their squawking broods. The birds - Cream and Gold Legbars, Rhodebars and Welbars - are the descendants of traditional, free-range, foraging breeds of the 1920s and 1930s, which were abandoned after the second world war with the introduction of battery farming.

Genetic scientists at Cambridge University kept a small group going until 1954, when the unit was wound up. A former undergraduate, John Croome, took them over as a hobby. "If he hadn't," Mr Applegarth says, "they would have been lost forever."

By chance, six years ago Mr Applegarth came across an old agriculture ministry booklet about the breeds, and tracked down Mr Croome, who was timely. Six months later

Mr Croome died. "I found myself taking over his breeds, and it has been rather a one-man band ever since."

One of the charms of the breeds is the colour of their eggs: rich, coffee-brown of the Rhodebars, pure white of the Gold Legbars, dark brick-red of the Welbars and, most unusual of all, the sky blue of the Cream Legbars. The size of the birds and their eggs are much the same as with the common domestic hen.

To help would-be keepers, Mr Applegarth has devised a self-assembly wooden hutch and mesh pen which can sit on the average suburban lawn. With a maximum length of 8ft 6in and width of 3ft 6in, the unit is large enough for three or four hens (three produce on average a dozen eggs a week).

To protect the lawn, the unit should be moved twice a day (the hutch has wooden skids). "But a lot of people keep it in one place and either put down straw or mount it on a raised bed of gravel so that it can be holed down and kept clean," Mr Applegarth says. Straw or wood shavings to line the hutch should be changed regularly - "and can go on the compost heap."

The hens need feeding and watering twice a day, and a constant supply of grit (poultry feed and grit are available from pet shops or agricultural merchants). Mr Applegarth recommends giving the hens the occasional tit-bit, such as bread crusts, apple cores and left-over vegetables. He also

advises that before buying hens and installing a run you should check with the local authority that no by-laws are being broken, and that there are no restrictive covenants in your house deeds forbidding the keeping of livestock.

At their Edwardian terrace home in Dulwich, south London, Professor Richard Robinson, a paediatric neurologist at Guy's Hospital, and his wife Jenny, keep three Cream Legbars and recycle mealtime leftovers (not meat), the end product enriching the soil of his vegetable patch. The hens are not demanding, says Mrs Robinson, who takes as much pleasure from giving eggs to friends as from stocking their own larder.

Rotating their pen would be impractical, Mrs Robinson says, because of the vegetable patch, pond, dovecote, shed and children's play space. Instead, they lay down straw and place plastic sheeting over the mesh of the run for protection from the rain. "I can't think of any drawback except that, if it rains one day and is very hot the next, the run has a tendency to smell."

The Robinsons's hens, dog, duck and doves co-exist amicably. Less friendly is a fox, which snatched the pet rabbit on the one night they forgot to put it in its hutch. However, they feel that their hen house gives adequate protection. Not so lucky were Dr and Andy Parkin, who lost three of

their four Welbars to a fox, even though they live in the centre of Bedford and have eight fences and walls.

Hens can be let out of their pen occasionally to range freely, providing there are no foxes or stray cats and dogs in the area. Mr Applegarth says, "They normally fly only if frightened, and then it would be only a couple of gardens away. At night they go in to roost naturally, so if you wait until late afternoon to release them they won't be out long."

He dismisses fears that hens become bored and listless if confined to a run. "Throw in some grass or weeds or cauliflower stalks to give them something to peck at. Because they're descended from foraging breeds, their natural reaction is to scratch and peck. They can spend hours searching for one grain of corn," Mr Parkin scatters a handful of whole wheat in the run. Tell-tale signs of boredom are pecked feathers. On a sunny day, Mr Applegarth says, you're quite likely to see a contented hen sunbathing.

Disease is rare, he says. "As long as the hens are kept clean and regularly fed and watered there shouldn't be a problem."

Although these requirements are minimal, keeping hens can be a bit of a tie. Mr Parkin says, "You need understanding friends and neighbours if you plan to be away, even for a day." They can also be noisy, he adds, particularly when they are laying. "Not as loud or annoying as a dog



bark, but if you're half-asleep at 5am, it would wake you up." He describes the sound as part cluck, part stifled cry.

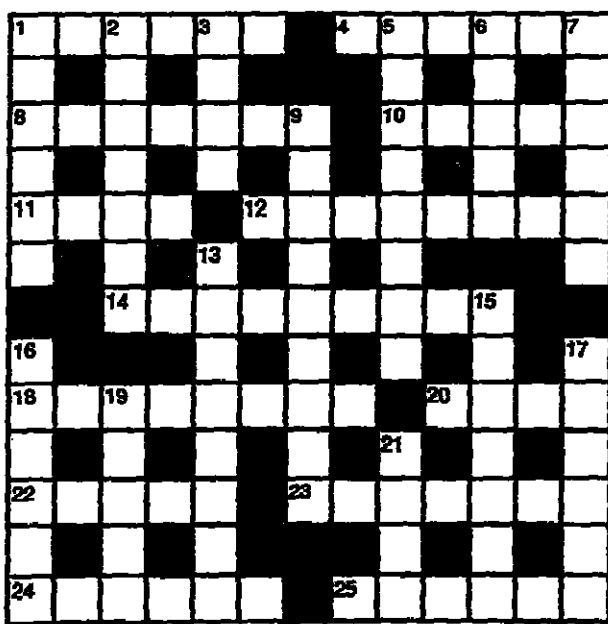
Mrs Robinson finds this enchanting. "It's the most wonderful sound. There can be a bit of a rush to see who gets to them first." Mr and Mrs Robinson have to compete with their two younger children, Kate, aged 12, and Harry, nine. The scramble stops in the winter when the hens give up laying for a couple of months while they grow new feathers.

Hens can produce eggs for two to three years. Then comes the task of disposing of a non-layer. "The traditional thing was to wring the neck and cook it, but many families might find it hard to eat

Jemima." Mr Applegarth says. The alternatives are to find a friend or vet to do the deed, or keep the hen as a pet. Mr Applegarth warns against putting new hens in the same run because of the atavistic rules of the pecking order.

While keeping hens is unlikely to be cost-effective - Mr Parkin reckons that after three years he might have broken even - the benefits can be less quantifiable. "I find their contented clucking very therapeutic," Professor Robinson says. "The hens keep me in touch with reality."

David Applegarth's hen house costs £140, young birds £9 each. For further details send SAE to Mr Applegarth at Uplands, Walsingham, Norfolk, NR23 7SP.



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Just released for Christmas: The Times Crosswords - Book 17. The Times Concise Crosswords - Book 5. The Sunday Times Crosswords - Book 12. £4.25 each.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD No 18

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Keep busy (6) | 1 Violate law (6) |
| 4 Internally destroyed (6) | 2 Reddish lynx with black tufted ears (7) |
| 8 Refrain (7) | 3 Heartfelt request (4) |
| 10 Scum (5) | 5 Weaker competitor (8) |
| 11 Slight out (4) | 6 Cog (5) |
| 12 Humorous four-line verse (8) | 7 Repudiate (6) |
| 14 Monkini-type garment (9) | 9 Loth (9) |
| 18 Senior councillor (8) | 13 Egret plume (8) |
| 20 Egyptian loop/cross device (4) | 15 In which Jack Worthing was left at Victoria (7) |
| 22 Confident belief (5) | 16 Succulent (6) |
| 23 Cause inconvenience (7) | 17 Filament (6) |
| 24 Simple catch (6) | 19 Uncertainty (5) |
| 25 Rough and uneven (6) | 21 Brian - 11C King of Ireland (4) |

SOLUTION TO NO 17

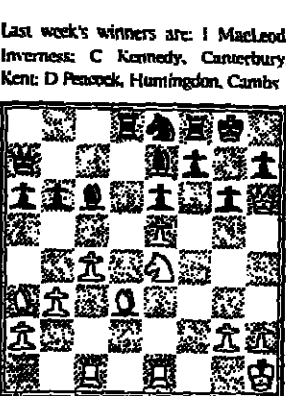
ACROSS: 3 Map 8 Maori 9 Recluse 10 Guarded 11 Annual 12 Assume 14 Abject 15 Gating 17 Health 20 Stump 21 Through 24 Upsilon 25 Steep 26 Dot

DOWN: 1 Smug 2 Morass 3 Mild 4 Prude 5 Scramble 6 Quince 7 Declutch 12 Augustus 13 Monopoly 16 Truism 18 Laurel 19 Stand 22 Rust 23 Hyde

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

This position is from the game Sveshnikov - Garchakov, Vilnius 1973. White's queen has penetrated into a hole in the black kingside. How did he capitalise? Send your answers on a postcard with your name and address to: The Times, 1 Finsbury Street, London EC2N 2DX. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine book. The answer will be published next Saturday. Solution to last Saturday's competition: 1...e5



Last week's winners are: 1 MacLeod, Inverness; 2 Kennedy, Canterbury; 3 D Penock, Huntingdon, Cambs

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

FILIFEROUS

- a. Filching, pinching
- b. Bringing fertility
- c. Having threadlike parts

GONDOLET

- a. A small gondola
- b. The Antipodean marmoset
- c. A racing sail

LEGERTY

- a. Readability
- b. Nimbleness
- c. Truthfulness

METASTOMA

- a. Hesitation for effect
- b. A crustacean's lip
- c. Top of Corinthian column

Answers on page 11

NOILLY PRAT



If we're going back to basics, may I suggest the simple addition of an ice cube?

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